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The history of West Rutland and its people

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The History of West Rutland and Its People



West Rutland Village



Rutland Prison Camp
and Hospital



Continental Barracks

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By Thomas J. Conlon



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Thomas J. Conlon

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Book Design

Donna J. (Conlon) Bisceglia

Front

- West Rutland Village
- Rutland Prison Camp and Hospital
- The Continental Barracks

Rear

- The causeway on Barre-Paxton Road (Route 122)
looking south across Long Pond

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Chapters 1 and 2 of this book is dedicated to the men, women and children who called West Rutland home. Though they were forced from their homes, camps and livelihoods, many years ago, their memories remain.

This book is also dedicated to all the former residents and friends who contributed information and pictures. They include Virginia Dulmaine and former residents: Bill Cantello, Harold Lloyd, Paul Talbot, Hazel (Talbot) Bemis, Jim Kennan, Raymond Kimball, Ruth (Beyea) Grenier, Donna (Wood) Clark, Norma (Wood) LaTour, my grandmother Inez (Taylor) Irons, and my Uncle Charles Taylor.

My daughter, Donna Bisceglia can take credit for the layout, index and all else that took this book to completion. It certainly would not have happened without her expertise. And last, but not least, thank you to my wife Nancy for her patience with me, throughout these years of research.

Sources:

“History of Rutland, Mass.” By Jonas Reed (1836)

“History of the Town of Rutland” by T.C. Murphy (1970)

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Mass. Archives

Worcester Telegram and Evening Gazette

Worcester Spy

“Picturesque Rutland” by Rutland Fire Department (1904)

FOREWORD

About the author...

At the age of six my family moved to Rutland, living on Pleasantdale Road. The year was 1944 and the country was deeply involved in the Second World War. In the village of West Rutland the last of the residents were in the process of leaving their homes. There was much sadness as many, before them, had already been through the heartbreaking process. While West Rutland would not be submerged under water, as many towns were, it might as well have been since all the people, that called the village home, would soon be forced to leave, by order of the Metropolitan District Commission.

My grandparents and uncle lived on a farm on Crawford Road, where my brother George and I spent most our time tending to chores and listening to stories, of the past, from our grandmother, Inez (Taylor) Irons. She had served as the West Rutland Village postmaster and had grown up on the farm. She was a wealth of knowledge for me as she told stories of the once bustling community and the Prison Camp. Her brother, my Uncle Charlie, would also have stories to tell of delivering milk in the village. At the tender age of six the thought of prisoners lurking in the area frightened me. I was not particularly interested in their stories, nor did I have any questions. At least, I didn't think I was interested. Those stories were stored in the recesses of my mind and some sixty odd years later they rose to the surface. Suddenly, I found those years, when West Rutland was a thriving village, to be very interesting.

I left Rutland when I was sixteen years of age, but my interest in West Rutland has remained to this day. I wish that my grandmother and uncle were here today to tell me more about West Rutland. I would definitely have many questions to ask today and I would be very interested.

I've spent many years hiking and exploring the area, with former resident and good friend, the late Bill Cantello. I must credit Bill for much of the knowledge that I have of West Rutland. Bill and I trudged through the brush searching for cellar holes. We've

explored old roads, the shoreline of the village ponds and the West Rutland Cemetery. I've also pored over records and pictures from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. I've interviewed many of the former residents of West Rutland. Sadly for me, many of those former residents have since departed, taking their memories with them.

I have also discussed, in this book, the saga of the Continental Barracks of Rutland. Many people have confused it with the Rutland Prison Camp and Hospital of 1903 to 1934.

The demise of the Prison Camp and Hospital, as well as, West Rutland Village was due to the creation of Quabbin Reservoir.

The saga of The Continental Barracks was an important event in the history of Rutland, Massachusetts during the Revolutionary War.

I do not profess to be an author nor would my grammar stand up to the scrutiny of my English teachers. In spite of this, I do hope that I've managed to capture the essence of West Rutland Village, The Rutland Prison Camp and Hospital, and The Continental Barracks.

Thomas J. Conlon



*Tom Conlon at the
West Rutland Village Memorial Dedication Monument
May 20, 2006*

CHAPTER 1

West Rutland Village

And

Outlying Areas



West Rutland Village

In this chapter, I'll take you on a tour of West Rutland from the time it was a thriving village up to the early 1940's when it was depopulated. All of the homes are now gone and all that remains is a stone foundation here, a gatepost there and the village cemetery. The cemetery is the final resting place for many of my ancestors as well as other former residents of West Rutland. Though they now rest in peace, the memories remain.

It is not possible to list the names of every resident that ever lived in West Rutland. In this book, I have listed the names of many former residents uprooted in the middle 1920's until the early 1940's, when the State of Massachusetts deemed their village to be within the Quabbin Reservoir watershed. The reservoir would supply Boston with water. In spite of their protests, they lost their homes, waterfront camps and their livelihoods.

Thomas J. Conlon

WEST RUTLAND VILLAGE

RUTLAND, MASSACHUSETTS

BUCK BROOK TO DEATHVILLE

This excerpt is from the 1836 book “History of Rutland, Mass.” by Jonas Reed:

A village has been commenced at what was originally called Buck Brook, in which are in operation a satinette factory, grist mill, with two run of stones, corn cracker, board and shingle mill, a temperance store and mechanics, of various trades.

Rutland, Massachusetts at that time also included the towns of Barre, Oakham, Hubbardston, a part of Princeton and Paxton. The village, now known as West Rutland, was known as Buck Brook after the brook that flowed through the village and into the pond. On this brook, in 1728, was a gristmill operated by Malcolm Hendry. It was located just before the brook passed under the present Route 122A and flowed into the pond. This pond is known today as Long Pond.

It is worth noting that Route 122A originally came through Rutland Center and turned sharply onto Fishermens Road continuing to the junction of Route 122. Presently, Route 122A passes through Rutland Center and due to new road construction goes directly down the hill, through the former West Rutland Village to Route 122.

In 1740, Long Pond was known as Gregory Pond, after the Gregory family that lived on the north end of the pond. Mr. Gregory, an immigrant from Ireland, was quite an enterprising individual. One of his endeavors was the lending of money to immigrants and prospective immigrants from Ireland. His policy regarding prospective clients was not to lend money to any person over forty years of age. Evidently, he considered them to be elderly and felt

that they would not be able to withstand the physical labor expected of them. The method of repayment was to work for Mr. Gregory until their debt was resolved. The hours were long and arduous and would often take from five to seven years of hard work, long hours and meager wages to resolve the debt. These workers were known as bondservants. Slavery might also come to mind.

The area around Gregory Pond was known as Buck Brook. By 1836 it was called Deathville, after the prominent family of Foster and Hepzibah Death who lived in the area.

It is worth noting at this time, Long Pond and its four bodies of water. The site of the present boat ramp is on Long Pond. The body of water on the opposite side of Route 122 was often called Middle Pond. The next body of water, to the other side of Fishermens Road, was called Hippy's Pond. Legend has it that it was named after an old man that lived in a camp bordering this body of water. The soon to be discussed Area B camps (38) were also located on Hippy's Pond. These three bodies of water are connected by way of culverts that pass under the roadbed. The fourth body of water, which is the site of the present swimming beach, was called Whitehall Pond. Area A camps (43) were located on this pond. A culvert that travels under the old railroad bed connects Hippy's Pond and Whitehall Pond. The railroad bed is known today as the Rail Trail. Without the roadways and rail trails there would be one pond.

By 1844, Josiah Peirce (alternate spelling: Pierce) was a very important member of the village. He conducted a thriving business selling lumber, food, clothing, oxen and barrels. He shod horses and repaired shoes for the villagers. He also sold baskets that he manufactured in his basket shop (25) which was on Lake Avenue, (the present 122A) across the street from his store. He also offered rooms for rent. He probably sold anything one might need. His motto could have been, "If I don't have it, you don't need it".



Lakeville Woolen Company (24)

In 1872 William J. Stearns had established a woolen mill on Buck Brook, just west of Ware Road. The mill, manufacturing bed comforters and cotton batting, was known as Lakeville Woolen Company (24). After a fire in 1879 destroyed this mill, employing fifty people, he soon rebuilt. His second mill burned in 1882. He rebuilt in 1884, doubling the capacity of the former mill. Soon he started buying homes in the village, building a store and tenement house. It was the custom in those days of the horse and buggy for mill owners to build available housing for their employees. This policy might have created some loyalty between the employee and employer. The convenience of living within walking distance of the job also insured the mill of employee's dependability during inclement weather. The employees could not use the weather as an excuse to miss work. Mr. Stearns operated this mill until his death. His wife Nellie and their son Frederick B. Stearns (5) then took over operation of the mill.

Nellie lived in a very nice home (30) across Lake Avenue (the present 122A) from the mill. When the State took over the property,

this home and the hotel annex were used to house construction workers who were working on the Quabbin Aqueduct. The aqueduct would carry water from the reservoir, through West Rutland. Shafts #6 and #7 and dikes #1, #2 and #3 were also to be built. The aqueduct entered West Rutland in the northwest corner and passed under Charnock Hill Road near the junction of Sassawanna Road. Shaft # 7 is located near the north end of Pine Plain Road and shaft #6 is located near the junction of Sassawanna and Charnock Hill Roads. The three dikes are near shaft #7 at the north end of Pine Plain Road. The Lyman School for Boys eventually purchased the hotel annex in 1932.

Nellie Stearns Brown and her son, Frederick B., sold the business in 1906 when it employed two to three hundred workers. Over the years, the mill changed ownership a number of times. It was known as Lakeville Woolen, Naquag Worsted, Daniels Woolen and finally Rutland Worsted Company. In 1919 Strong, Hewatt and Griffin, the final owner, purchased the property. They took control of the property in 1920 and continued to manufacture fine woolen worsted goods until the Metropolitan District Commission took over the property in the early 1920's. At that time the mill, now known as Rutland Worsted Company, owned nearly every home and building in the village. Their plans had been to make West Rutland an important center for the manufacture of fine woolen worsted goods used in the making of men's suits. Andrew J. Griffin was the general manager and lived in a bungalow (33) in the village. This plan was in jeopardy as the State of Massachusetts had other ideas. Plans were underway to create a reservoir that would supply Boston with drinking water. The M.D.C. was the agency that was to acquire all the property deemed to be within the watershed of the reservoir. Much to the dismay of many, this area of Rutland would be within the watershed. The mill, taken in the early 1920's, was later torn down. In 2009 the ruins are still visible near the junction of Ware Road and Route 122A.



Home of Nellie Stearns Brown (30)



On left: West Rutland Village Post Office and Store (29)

Center: hotel annex

On right: Barely visible Talbot home (28)



*Employees of the Rutland Worsted Company (24)
Photograph taken circa early 1920's*

Some of the employees shown are:

First row: unknown, unknown, John Mason, John Bechan, unknown, unknown, Joseph Bechan, unknown, unknown, unknown, unknown.

Second row: unknown, unknown, unknown, unknown, unknown, unknown, Ruth Santimaw (@ eight years of age, daughter of William and Ruth Santimaw), unknown, unknown, unknown.



The West Rutland Village Post Office and Store (29)

Along with the mill, the village had its own Post Office and Store (29) which operated until 1931. The postmasters/postmistresses were Warren Sibley in 1849, Simon Black in 1852, Horace Park (77) in 1854, Michael Quimby in 1858 and Andrew Pierce (alternate spelling: Peirce) in 1862. Additional postmaster/postmistresses were Mary Quimby (51) from 1874-1912, Georgianna (Taylor) Bothwell (10) from 1912-1918, Alice M. Wales from 1918-1920, Inez (Taylor) Irons (10) (sister of Georgianna) in 1920, William Glynn in 1921 and John O'Brien from 1922-1931.

At the corner of Ware Road and the present Route 122A stood the home of the Joseph and Lucy Talbot family (25). The family also lived in the home across the street (28). The third home (59) for the Talbots was in the village.

Joseph Ware (26) lived in a very attractive home at the corner of Ware Road and the present Route 122A. He was associated with the woolen mill, involved in the sale of real estate and sold lumber from his sawmill. His sawmill was located on Buck Brook a short walk from his home.

Next door to Joseph Ware, in the middle of the present Route 122A, was a home (61) owned by the Rutland Worsted Company.



Home of Joseph Ware (26)

That home was dismantled and rebuilt in Boylston or West Boylston, Mass. The author is unable to determine the exact location.

Traveling back down the present 122A, past the Nellie Stearns Brown home (30) you will come to the White family home (32). This home stands on the site of the former Jones Hotel (32). The hotel, gone before 1900, was owned by Thomas Jones. The writer is unable to determine its fate, although fire is a strong possibility. Down the hill, next door to the White's, was the home of the McKinstry family (31), followed by the Squarks (60) and their son Ferdinand. There are the remains of a stone wall near the State highway department yard on Route 122A. This stone wall is part of the chicken coops that were in the Squarks backyard. Next door to the Squarks and across the inlet of Buck Brook to Long Pond was the home of the Passierbs (59) and their children Stanley, Sophie and Amelia. Joseph and Lucy Talbot's family also lived here for a time.

Across the road and down the hill from the McKinstry family was the home of William and Ruth Santimaw and family (9).



*Home of the White family (32)
Site of the former Jones Hotel*



Home of the McKinstry family (31)

Continuing down the present Route 122A from the Santimaw's stood the home of Charlie Martin (22). He previously lived in a home (49) near the Prison Camp (47).

Next to Charlie Martin, at the time of the State takeover, was the home of Percy and Mary Beyea (21) and their children Grace, Dorothy, Ruth and Walter. Ruth Beyea reminisced as to how they would pick blueberries and mayflowers and sell them at a stand on Route 122. She also mentioned going through the village cemetery (68) to go to the swimming hole (73). T/SGT. Walter Beyea was a decorated war veteran of World War 2. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross and Oak Leaf Cluster.

Before the Beyea family, this was the home of Walter and Theresa Wood (21) and their children Hazel, Harold, Norma, Donna, Elmer, Martha and Marion. Harold Wood, Ray Kimball and other village boys would hike over to the Prison Camp to play baseball with the prisoners. We will discuss that further in the chapter pertaining to the Prison Camp and Hospital (47, 48).



Home of Charles Martin (22)



*Home of Percy and Mary Beyea (21)
Walter and Theresa Wood family formerly lived here*



*The Beyea family (21)
Left to right: Grace, Dorothy, Walter, Ruth, and their father Percy
Girls in front row are Grace's daughters Lynn and Ruth*



Rutland Junior High School (20)

Across the road from the Beyea home and at the approximate entrance into the present picnic grove was the location of the Rutland Junior High School (20). This school, serving the entire town, was closed in the late 1930's. The students were then transferred to the school in the center of town.

There is a monument (76) (pictured on page 69), in the picnic grove at the junction of Routes 122 and 122A, dedicated to the former West Rutland Village and its residents.

In the area of the picnic grove was the home of William and Rose Russell (19) and Howard and Arlene Conley (18). Arlene formerly lived with her mother in a camp near the West Rutland Train Station (39). To the far end of the picnic grove was the Balcom's home (17). This home was very close to the water's edge and it frequently flooded - hence it was known as "The Floating Palace". Mr. Balcom was a guard at the Prison Camp (47).



*On left: Home of Howard and Arlene Conley (18)
On right: William and Rose Russell and Ira Grapes (19)*



Home of the Balcom family (17)

Crossing the causeway of Route 122 to the present boat ramp was the home of the Houston and the Doyle families (6). At the time of the State takeover, Houston was listed as the resident of this home.

On the left after the boat ramp is Crawford Road. A quarter of a mile up this road, on the right, was the farm of George M. and Annie Taylor (10) and their children Georgianna, Charles, Inez and Hazel. The State took some of the Taylor farmland, leaving their home. Members of the Taylor family continued to live on this farm until the 1980's. George and his son Charlie would bring milk to the West Rutland Train Station (39) by horse and wagon to be shipped on the train. Enough milk was put aside to deliver to the homes in the village. The writer's uncle, Charlie Taylor, told him the story of how the horse would plod along pulling the wagonload of milk. Needing no direction, it would only stop at the homes of the regular customers. The horse must have felt, if you did not buy milk yesterday, "I'm not going to stop today". Who was it that said they were dumb animals?



*Georgianna (Taylor) Bothwell
and niece Marguerita Irons
Georgianna died in the worldwide
influenza epidemic of 1918.*



Inez and Hazel Taylor

Photographs circa 1917

Albina Morin (11) lived in a comfortable home, built of stone, on Route 122, just north of Crawford Road. Across the road was her restaurant, called The Poplars (12). She also had a large supply of boats in the backyard that were rented for use on Long Pond, just a few steps from the back door of The Poplars. It would certainly be an expensive piece of waterfront property by today's standards.



Home of Albina Morin (11)
The Santimaw family formerly lived here



The Poplars Restaurant (12)



Home of the Charles and Lillian Grime family (15)



Hi-Spot Ice Cream also known as Baby Anne's (13)

The Grime family (15), as well as, the Dufault (16) family, lived on Route 122 near Crawford Road. The Grime family operated an ice cream stand called Baby Anne's (13), a short distance from their home. The ice cream stand was named after their daughter, Anne. It was listed as Hi-Spot Ice Cream when the property was taken by the

State and appeared to be owned by the Prescott family. Tattersall and Bellis (14) operated a filling station and auto repair shop a short distance north on Route 122.

Returning to the intersection of Route 122 and the present Route 122A was the home of Mary Quimby (51). For a period of time, Walter and Theresa Wood also lived here.

Continuing south on Route 122 was the home of Charles Swanson (8). Next door to Charles Swanson and across the street from the village cemetery (68) lived Sidney and Annie Hopps (7) and their daughter Elsie. Sidney sold gasoline as well as penny candy from his store, which was just steps from his door. The candy store was a favorite spot for the village kids when they had a few pennies to spend. Yes, there actually was candy that could be had for just a penny. Annie Hopps was also the local telephone operator.



Home of Sidney and Annie Hopps (7)

Directly across Route 122A from Sidney Hopps is the West Rutland Village Cemetery (68). The cemetery is the final resting place for many of the village residents including George M. and Annie Taylor, Charles Taylor and former postmistresses, Georgianna

(Taylor) Bothwell and Mary Quimby. The village residents originally owned the cemetery property. When the State took over the area, the Town of Rutland assumed ownership and to this day, in 2009, the town maintains the grounds. To insure that the deceased, many of whom are the writer's ancestors, may rest in peace, it is hoped that the town of Rutland will continue maintaining their final resting place.

Walking through the cemetery and straight to the water, one comes to the village swimming hole (73) that was so popular with the village children. Walk back through the cemetery to the highway and turn right onto Route 122. After a short distance, there is an indication of an old path on the right. Following this path, you will soon cross a small bridge. In this area, close to the water, is the site of a camp that belonged to Frederick B. Stearns (5), the owner of the former Lakeville Woolen Company. This camp is now the home of the Rutland Sportsmen Club on Pleasantdale Road.

Return to Route 122, take a right onto Pleasantdale Road and another right onto East Hill Road. After approximately a quarter of a mile, on the right, there will be an opening with the remains of gateposts. From here, it is a short walk along a formerly crushed-stone driveway which leads to the far west end of Long Pond. With some investigating, one may find indications of a former home on the point. On this point, facing Long Pond was the Coughlin home (3). It conjures up an image of sitting on the front porch sipping morning coffee while gazing the length of the pond. It is easy to understand the heartbreak the family must have experienced when they were forced to leave their home and this idyllic area.

With some energy, one might come across the remains of the Priest estate (4) a short distance away from the Coughlin home. The remains of the Priest estate are more visible when approaching this area by boat. The camp of W.H. Bowman (56) was also located in this area.



Home of Edward J. Cross (1)

Following the old crushed-stone driveway for a short distance and looking through the weeds and brush, the remains of probably the most impressive home in the area is evident. This is the former summer home of Edward J. Cross (1). Cross, the owner of a large construction company, fought the State's attempt to take his property but even with his substantial resources it was all to no avail. His home, with its huge stone fireplace, sat on the hillside overlooking the water. The remains of the stone fireplace sit amongst the rubble. The estate with its gated entryway and private drive included a bathhouse, large boathouse, and other buildings. All of which supported a comfortable lifestyle.



Home of the Coughlin family (3)



Home of Ralph Cross (2)

Continuing along this same driveway for a short distance, one comes to the comfortable but slightly less impressive summer home of his son Ralph Cross (2). This home also employed a large amount of stone and included all the buildings that would make life enjoyable. There is ample evidence of where this home stood some sixty-five plus years ago. All that is left of the Cross estates, with their guest quarters, boathouse and assorted outbuildings are cellar holes and rubble. With just a little imagination, one can visualize the beauty of these homes and grounds when they were bustling with family activity.

Return to Pleasantdale Road, cross Route 122 and take a left onto Ware Road. On the right was the home of H.A. Kennan (75). A short distance down the hill and on the left is a large stone foundation. This was the location of a barn (64) belonging to the Rutland Worsted Company. Continuing down the hill on the right was the Winot home (62). The Garrahy family (62) also called this home for a time.

Just before Buck Brook, on the right, stood the home of Herbert and Evelyn Kennan (27) and their four sons Herbert, Harry, Jim and Richard. In the spring of 2006, one of the sons, Jim, spoke at the West Rutland Village Memorial Dedication Ceremony (76). He spoke of when the boys would go through the cemetery to their favorite swimming hole... they would leave their bathing suits at home. The writer was never able to get a definitive report as to what the girls in the village wore when they were swimming. It is likely that they were always properly attired. Jim told the many people at the dedication in 2006 that, *“Even after leaving over sixty-five years ago, in my heart, I will always be a West Rutlander.”*



Home of Herbert and Evelyn Kennan and family (27)



The Bungalow (33)

*This building, in its final days, was the home of Andrew J. Griffin,
the general manager of the Rutland Worsted Company.*



The Duplexes (34)

Crossing over Route 122A, we continue toward the junction of Fishermens Road. On the left side was a building owned by Rutland Worsted Company. In the early 1900's it was called the bungalow (33) and was used for social functions. At the time of the State takeover, it was the residence of Andrew J. Griffin. Across the road from the bungalow were the duplexes (34). Former tenants in the duplexes were the families of Clarence Mason, Chester Oliver, George Gaudette, Henry and Ina Denny, Pat and Olive Santimaw, the McNamara's, Thomas and Irene Mattson and son Bob, Fred and Florence Cantello and their children Bill and Beverly. Bill, a friend of this writer, has been a wealth of information. We have spent many years hiking the woods of West Rutland, reminiscing, searching for cellar holes, and applying whatever knowledge I could gather from him for inclusion in this book. Bill recalled the days when the kids in the village could ride their sleds down the hill without fear of traffic. This hill is now known as Route 122A. Bill also spoke of his friend Elmer Wood. Elmer and Bill spent many hours fishing on Long Pond. He and other village boys spoke of a beautiful young lady named Della. We will speak of Della later on in this chapter.

At the corner of Fishermens Road was the home of the Alexander Dempsey family (35). This was once the Peirce home (alternate spelling: Pierce). It was also the home, for a time, of the Walter and Theresa Wood family. The Dempsey family was the residents at the time of the State takeover.



Home of the Dempsey family (35)
Home of Walter and Theresa Wood family and the Peirces

Crossing Fishermens Road, on the left, was the home of the Bardsleys (37). The Clifford family also lived here for a time. Across the street was the Aubertine family home (36). This building (below - with the arrow) was the former one-room schoolhouse.



On left: Home of the Bardsley family (37)
The Clifford family also lived here
On right: Home of the Aubertine family (36)



West Rutland Schoolhouse - One Room (36)

The West Rutland one-room schoolhouse (36) was located at the corner of Fishermens and Whitehall Roads. The school was built in 1734 and this photograph was taken circa 1905. A duplicate school was located in North Rutland. Even though the village was depopulated within a few years, a new school was built in the early 1920's at a cost of \$16,000. Approximately 50 seventh and eighth grade children from the entire town attended the new school. Two of the schoolteachers at the one-room school were Miss Anna Finnerty and Miss Genevieve Doran.

While the building was being used as a one-room school, it also served a number of other functions. While it would be discouraged today, church services were held in the schoolhouse. It also served as the village meetinghouse. For the purpose of worship, Catholic families generally met in the homes of Daniel Spooner and Dennis O'Herron. In 1867, a house at the corner of Barre Paxton Road and Irish Lane was purchased and converted into a building that would be suitable for Catholic Mass.

To the right of the site of the former one-room schoolhouse are the remains of an old road that goes up the hill and ends near the site of the Continental Barracks (54). This road was known as Rocky Run. This is a rather pretty walk in the spring of the year when flowers are in bloom. This road passed by an old quarry about three quarters of the way up the hill. The use of the quarry has not been determined, but in Jonas Reed's 1836 "History of Rutland, Mass." it is mentioned as being in existence at that time and possibly as early as 1759.

The Finns (66) lived on the south side of Route 122A near the junction of Fishermens Road.

Across Whitehall Road from the schoolhouse was a large cluster of summer camps. The author has identified this area as Area B camps (38). West Rutland was a mecca for summer fun when many people flocked into the area to spend the summer on Long Pond. Earlier this area was known as Charter's Grove (38) after Andrew Charter, the owner of the property who also conducted a store on the premises. At the time the property was taken over, it had been called Fahlstrom's Grove (38), no doubt, because there were many members of the Fahlstrom family who owned camps there.

A beautiful young lady would be at her parents camp on weekends and during the summer months. Boys would hide behind the trees, waiting for the girl named Della to come out in her bathing suit, heading for the beach. They were quite sure that Della was never aware that she was being watched. This author is sure that Della was quite aware. In the author's endeavors to locate every home in West Rutland and its occupants, the Hurst camp (38) was one of the easiest to pinpoint. Every boy in the village could tell me exactly where the camp was located. Personally, I am sorry that I never had the opportunity to meet Della.

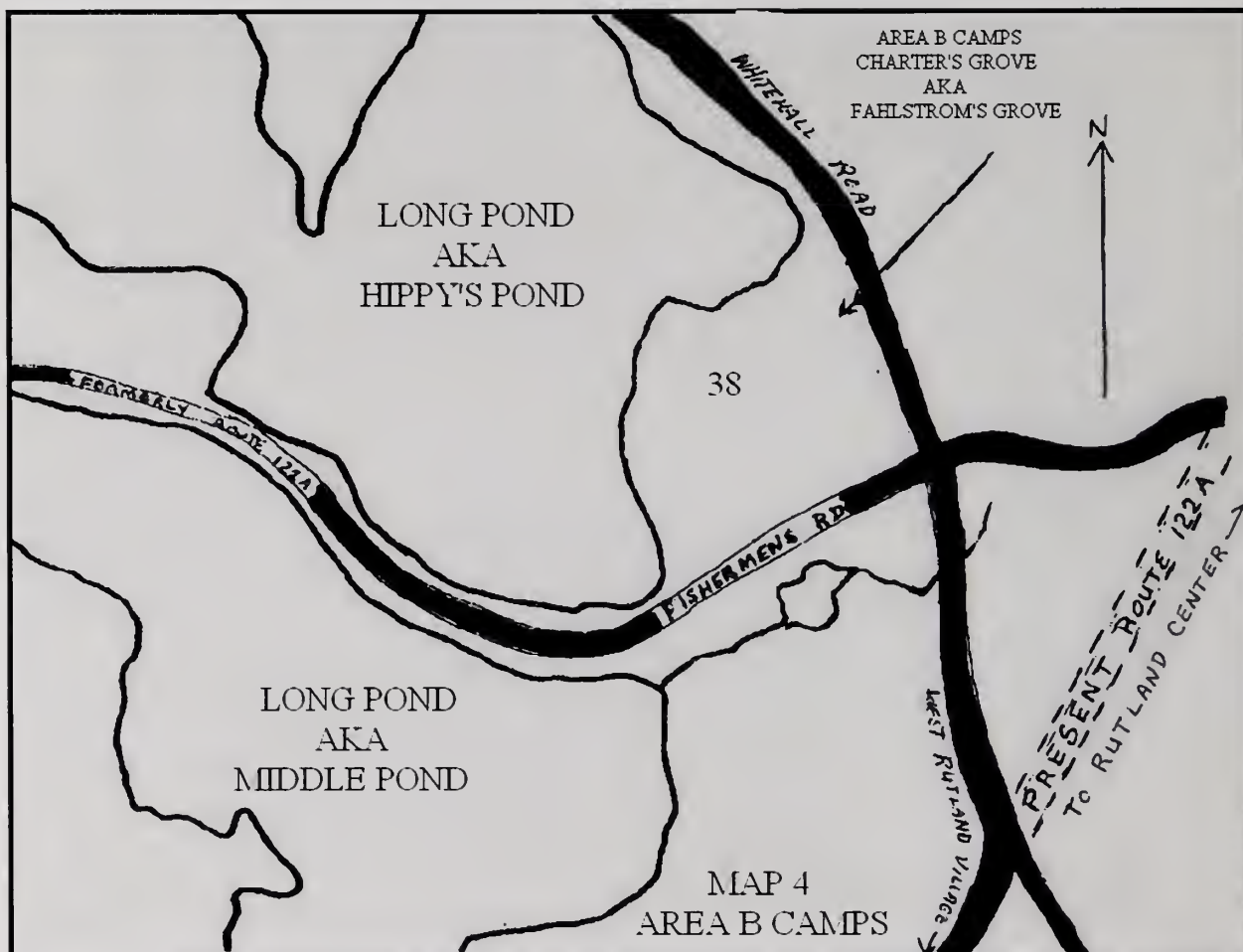


The camp of Albert and Stella Hurst and daughter Della (38)



*Della Hurst
on her wedding day*

Some of the families owning camps in Area B (38) were the Fahlstroms, Alfred Anderson, Newman Bacon, Frank Carlow, Emil and Anna Stickler, Carl and Helen Melgren, Inez Hilton and the Hursts. The only visible indication that these camps ever existed is the ruins of a stone fireplace.



Map #4 Area B Camps (38)



Property of Franz and Hulda Fahlstrom (38)



Camp of Franz and Hulda Fahlstrom (38)



Camp of Clifford Fahlstrom (38)



Camp of Hazel Fahlstrom (38)



Camp of Helen Fahlstrom (38)



Camp of Alfred Anderson (38)



Camp of Newman Bacon (38)



Camp of Frank Carlow (38)



Camp of Carl and Helen Melgren (38)



Camp of Emil and Anna Stickler (38)

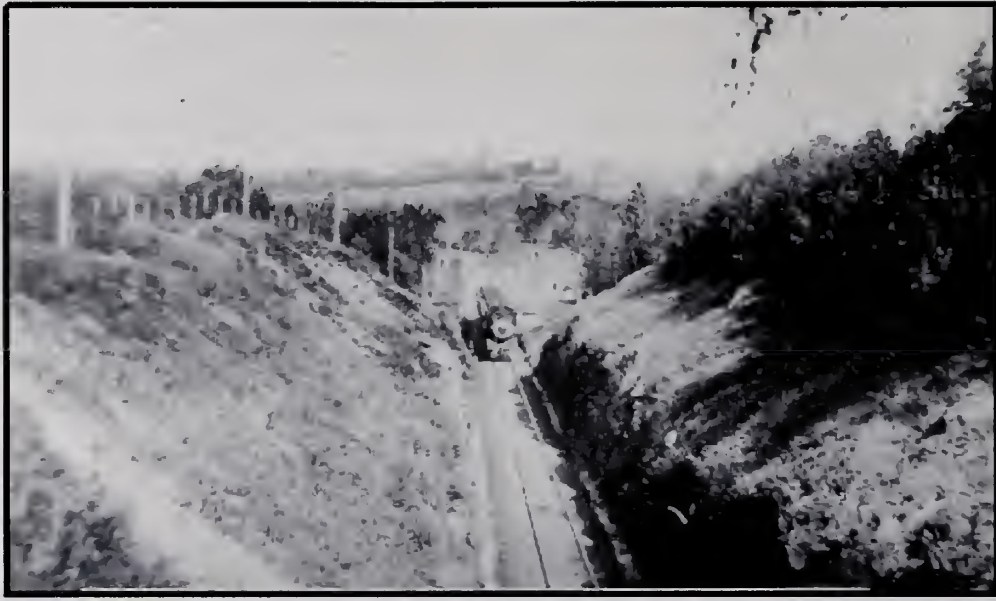
Just a short distance down the road from the Area B camps is the Rail Trail, a walking trail that follows the old railroad tracks that passed through West Rutland.



West Rutland Train Station (39)

Walking up the trail easterly for just a few hundred feet from Whitehall Road is the site of the West Rutland Train Station (39). The station house was located on the south side of the tracks, but there is little evidence to pinpoint the exact spot. This station was used by the mill to ship and receive goods. The Prison Camp (47) also used the train station to receive supplies as well as ship and receive prisoners. After the collapse of the stock market in 1929 and the mill and prison camp closings, the final blow was the hurricane of 1938. The storm washed away much of the track, causing the railroad to cease operations.

Continue walking the Rail Trail east and passing under Charnock Hill Road is the Charnock Cut (40). To enable the train to pass through this area in the winter the railroad employed a man to chip the ice off the rock that rose on both sides of the track.

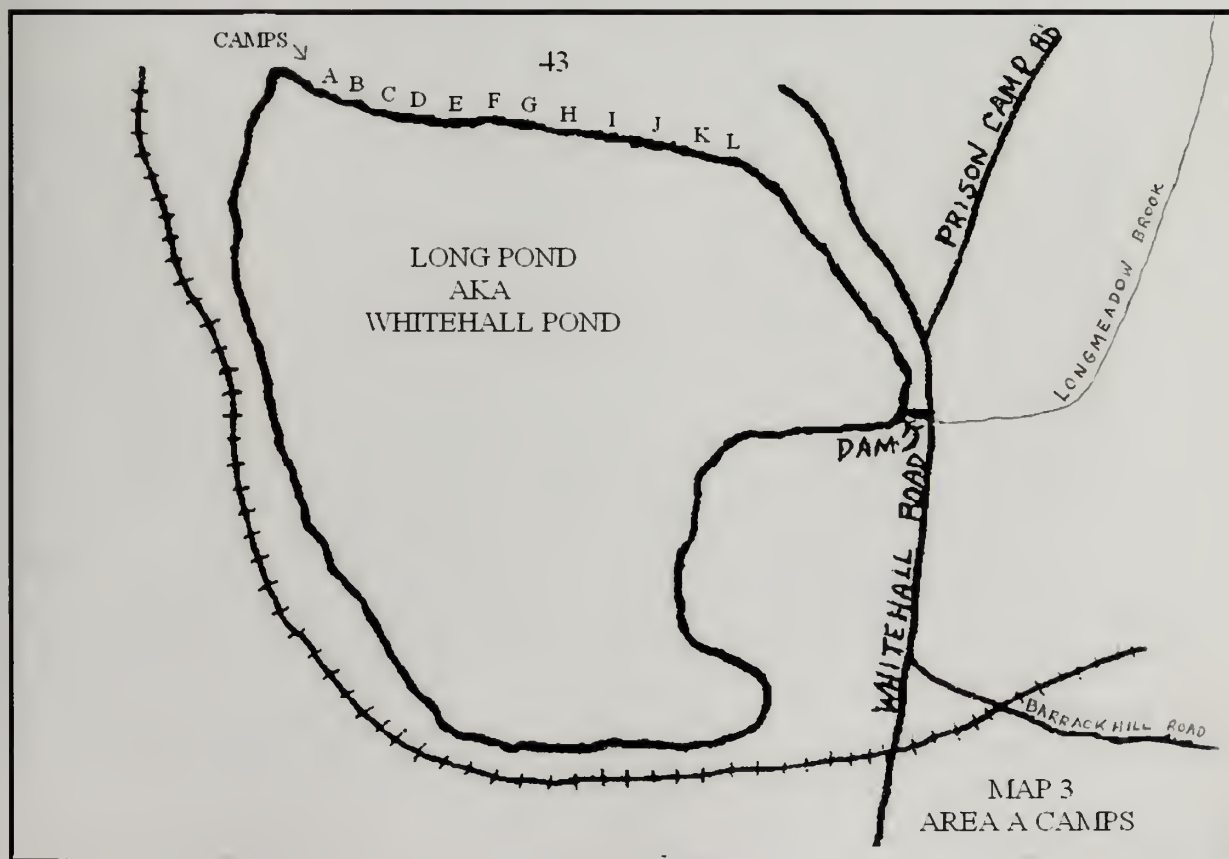


The Charnock Cut (40)



Camp of Worcester Academy (42)

Return to Whitehall Road via the Rail Trail. At this point, take a right and cross the dam. The body of water on your left is Whitehall Pond. On the right shoreline is the site of the Rutland State Park swimming beach, operated by the Division of Conservation and Recreation. The author has identified this area as Area A camps (43). Seventy plus years ago this shoreline was lined with twelve summer homes. The families on Whitehall Pond, in Area A, were Carl Leafe (A), John and Winnie Erickson (B), Karl Erickson (C), John Bergdahl (D), Joseph and Florence Dutrum (E), Hilda Bergdahl (F), Edward and Elizabeth Fox (G), Charles and Mary Spence (H), Timothy and Josephine Kenneally (I), Edmund Trudel (J), Joseph LaPointe (K), and George King (L). On the opposite shoreline was a camp that belonged to Worcester Academy (42). Other families that lived in this area in earlier times were the Larsons, Maloneys and the Burkes.



Map #3 Area A Camps (43)

The following are photographs of 5 of 12 camps located in Area A (43).



Camp of John and Winnie Erickson (43B)



Camp of Karl Erickson (43C)



Camp of Edward and Elizabeth Fox (43G)



Camp of Charles and Mary Spence (43H)



Camp of Timothy and Josephine Kenneally (43I)



Home of Mary O'Leary (44)



Home of Mathew Delehanty (45)

Across Whitehall Road from Area A camps was a very nice home belonging to Mary O'Leary (44). As you continue up Whitehall Road you will approach a three-way intersection. Just before this intersection, to the right, was the farmhouse of Mathew Delehanty (45) and directly across the road stood his barn.

At this intersection, Whitehall Road bears off to the left continuing to Route 122. Going straight ahead leads you onto Pine Plain Road. This road was named for the pine that was logged from the area. There were a few homes at the far end of Pine Plain Road. One was home of the Louis Kitchen family (57), the other was the home of Dwight Blake (23). Horace Park (77) had an oval trotting park on this road in 1850. Also in this area in the early 1700's was the site of a tavern owned by Aaron Rice, called Uncle Aaron's Folly. Taverns in those days were to not only partake of an alcoholic beverage but also hear the latest news of the day. They were also travelers' rest stops. Distances were often noted from tavern to tavern as opposed to city-to-city. The Sibley Tavern was located in West Rutland.

Going back down Pine Plain Road, and turning left on Longmeadow Road brings one to a lane on the left. At the top of this lane was the Oak Hill Farm. This was the home and farm of the James F. O'Herron family (46). When the State bought this property of over four hundred acres, it was one of the largest farms in the town of Rutland.



Home of James F. O'Herron (46)

Continuing on Longmeadow Road takes you to Prison Camp Road. If you turn right, this road takes you back to Whitehall Pond. Turning left on Prison Camp Road will bring one to The Prison Camp (47) on the left. The Rutland Prison Camp and Hospital will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

The next indication of a past homestead is the ruins on both sides of the road of property belonging to the Brodmerkles (63). On the left was the home and on the right are the remains of the barn foundation.

A few hundred feet and a turn left puts one onto Rueben Walker Road. A few hundred feet on the right and in the woods one could find a hermit who went by the name of Raymond “Stubs” Thrasher (71).



Home of the Brodmerkle family (63)

Return down the gravel Prison Camp Road to Whitehall Pond. Across the road from the pond was the home of Oscar and Maude Lloyd (41) and their children Enid, Harold, and Milton. Oscar Lloyd was the last stationmaster at the West Rutland Train Station (39). On the same side of the road was the Paris family (74). Ware River Manufacturing Company owned this property.



Home of Oscar and Maude Lloyd (41)



Home of the Suchocki family (55)

Alternate spelling: Suchochi

Continuing down Whitehall Road, take a left onto Barrack Hill Road. After crossing the Rail Trail you will pass the site, on the left, of the former Suchocki home (55); alternate spelling Suchochi. Descendents of this family remain in Rutland today.

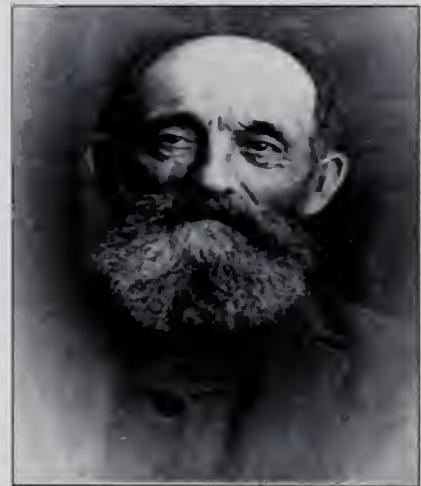
At the junction of Barrack Hill Road and Charnock Hill Road is a

marker on the left, noting the location of the Continental Barracks (54). In the late 1700's, a Mr. Henry operated a tavern in this area. Turning left onto Charnock Hill Road is another marker on the left denoting the location of the Continental Barracks. The Barracks will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

Continuing down Charnock Hill Road a short distance on the left after passing over the Rail Trail was the home of John Cleary (72). On the left is the site of the first gristmill (69) in Rutland that was on Mill Brook. Indians burned this mill in 1723. Many years later Paul Wheeler would operate a mill on this site. Among his products were shovels, spades, hoes and wooden pegs.



Home of John Cleary (72)



*Paul Wheeler (69)
Interred at
Goose Hill Cemetery (70)*

Across Charnock Hill Road was the home of Roscoe and Dorinda Towne (58). The stone foundation is all that remains of their home and barn. Next, we pass the site, on the left, of the home of Ethel Brown (53).

Goose Hill Cemetery (70) will soon come up on the left. This is one of the older burial grounds in town and is the final resting place of some of northwest Rutland's earlier settlers including Paul Wheeler, Zebulon Strong and Captain Rowland Wheeler.

In 1794 a primitive dugout was built into the side of a hill of the cemetery. This was the abode of Captain Jonathan Clark, his wife Phoebe Bowen Clark and her daughters, Betsy and Polly Bowen. Raised in squalor the girls were deprived of any comforts or stability. Not welcome in many towns, the family was constantly on the move from town to town. It seems though, that this was not a great problem for Betsy. By the time she was an adult she was a world traveler and would go on to marry a rich man by the name of Stephen Jumel. When Jumel passed away, he left Betsy a sizable estate. Madame Betsy Jumel, in later years, would become the wife of a former Vice President of the United States and thus became, Mrs. Aaron Burr. Truly, her life was a rags to riches story. Betsy died on June 14, 1865, a very wealthy woman.



Madame Betsy Jumel

A short walk into the woods from Goose Hill Cemetery is a plaque identifying the Rutland Prison Camp and Hospital Cemetery (67). A few years ago, it was spruced up as part of an Eagle Scout Project. The cemetery will be discussed in Chapter 2, which deals with the Prison Camp and Hospital (47, 48).



Home of Anna McGann (50)



Home of Robert B. Adams (52)

Continue on Charnock Hill Road to a gravel road on your left. At this corner was the home of Anna McGann (50). To the rear of her home is the stone foundation of a large mill. Turn left onto this gravel road and on your right is the remains of a mill and dam on Ware River. Robert B. Adams home (52) stood across the river and was reached via a private bridge that crossed over the Ware River.

Continuing on the gravel road and just before crossing Longmeadow Brook, begin watching on the left hand side of the road for a set of steps to nowhere. These steps at one time were the entryway to the home of Prison Camp guard Charlie Martin (49) when he lived in this area. Later he owned a home in the village (22).

At the end of this gravel road, you are now entering the area of the Rutland Prison Camp and Hospital (47, 48). Refer to Chapter 2 for detailed information regarding the Prison Camp.

We are now somewhat stretching the boundaries of West Rutland, being actually in northwest Rutland. Therefore, as not to infringe on a possible future book on North Rutland, this area will serve as the outer limits of this book on West Rutland and Outlying Areas.

By the mid 1940's all the businesses are uprooted, the jobs lost and the people gone. What are left are foundations where summer camps, homesteads and businesses formerly stood. There remains a cemetery, witness to many generations of families working, playing and kids running to the swimming hole. There is much sadness and grief because some of these families had been on their property for generations. Reportedly, one man committed suicide over the prospect of giving up his home. After fifty years, one elderly woman still could not bring herself to submit to an interview to discuss the experience of leaving her old homestead.

The neighborhood is quiet today with only cars and trucks passing through the village, oblivious to the history of the area. Where it was once bustling with activity, today it must seem like a ghost town to former residents.

- There are no children in the winter sliding down the hill of Route 122A.
- The little girls are no longer selling blueberries and mayflowers on the shoulder of the road.
- There are no boys headed for the pond with their fishing poles slung over their shoulder, like Huckleberry Finn.....or maybe to

see if Della is swimming today.

- There are no kids running to Sidney's store for penny candy or Baby Anne's for ice cream.
- One does not see the mill that turned out the fine cloth used to make men's suits-the same mill where Evelyn Kennan was guardian of the keys after it closed.
- The Delehantys, O'Herrons, Taylors and Brodmerkles are no longer working in the fields or tending their livestock, nor is George Taylor and his son Charlie delivering milk in the village with their infamous horses.
- All the summer camps encircling the pond are gone, leaving little hint of their existence.

As this author hikes the woods and explores the area that was home to so many, his mind wanders back, thinking that all is not lost. It is understandable if the uprooted residents feel that the taking of their way of life is anything but positive. Were it not for the State taking their property because it was within the watershed of the soon to be Quabbin Reservoir, and the creation of Rutland State Park, it is probable that what we would have in West Rutland today would be:

- Many streets and automobiles where trees once stood.
- It is a strong likelihood that we would have many homes encircling the water thus depriving the general public of access... for the benefit of a few.
- Instead, we have acres of forest, miles of hiking trails, hunting, fishing, and swimming areas, as well as a public boat ramp...to be enjoyed by all.

May the State of Massachusetts deem it feasible to preserve this area for the benefit of all and not just a few.

West Rutland

In the valley on the west side
of Rutland

Have been homes to men

People have lived there & prospered

Some times they ride by again.

What a change that the years
have made there.

The houses are gone so are friends

They are scattered all over the country

Where ever opportunity sends

As you near you could see in
the distance

Two tall tanks that rose in the sky

They had a task to accomplish

It's finished & now on their side
they lie

It takes such a short while to wreck them

No sentiment can stand in the way

No stranger will care that no land
marks are there

That you knew in your child-
hood days.

Evelyn Kennan (27) wrote this poem in 1943. In 2007, her son, Jim Kennan, contributed it. She lived in the village with her husband and four sons. The family was forced to move out by the Metropolitan District Commission in 1941.

Additional photographs of West Rutland and its people...



Home of the Talbot family (25). It also has served as a pool room and barber shop. It was located at the corner of Ware Road and Route 122A. It was also Josiah Peirce's basket shop.



Third home of the Joseph and Lucy Talbot family (28) and their children Hazel, Ruth, Arthur, Bob, Ray and Paul.



Home (61) owned by The Rutland Worsted Company



Home of the Squarks family (60)



*Home of the Passierb family (59)
The Joseph and Lucy Talbot family also lived here*



Home of William and Ruth Santimaw (9)



Home of the Houston / Doyle families (6)
Houston listed as resident at time of takeover



Home of Doris Dufault (16)



*Home of Mary Quimby (51)
Former village postmistress 1874-1912
The Walter Wood family also lived here for a time.*



Home of Charles Swanson (8)



Camp of Frederick B. Stearns (5)



The Priest Estate (4)



Camp of W.H. Bowman (56)



Home of H.A. Kennan (75)



*The barn (64), located on Ware Road and
owned by Rutland Worsted Company*



Home of the Garrahy and Winot families (62)



Home of Louis Kitchen (57)



Home of Dwight Blake (23)



Home of the Paris family (74)



Home of Roscoe and Dorinda Towne (58)



Home of Ethel Brown (53)



Home of Charles Martin (49)



*Marjorie Mason
circa 1936*



*Richard Kennan, Bob Mattson,
and Jim Kennan circa 1937*



*Gertrude Stearns
Photograph taken at the home (30) of Nellie Stearns Brown
Circa early 1900's*



Pat Santimaw (34)



The old hippy on Hippy's Pond



Arlene (Bousket) Conley (18)



*Contributed by the Kitchen
family (57)*



*Evelyn Kennan (27) is happily shoveling snow
Mother of Herbert, Richard, Harry and Jim*



*Jim Grime (on right) and Harry Kennan.
Jim was killed in Germany during World War 2
He was the son of Charles and Lillian Grime.*



Left to right: Arthur Talbot, Jim Kennan and Herbert Kennan getting on Griffin's bus



First row: Rich Kennan

Second row: Ray Talbot, Jim Kennan, Paul Talbot, unknown, Arthur Talbot (boy with mouth open), Harry Kennan

Third row: Bob Talbot, Herbert Kennan



*West Rutland Grammar School
Photograph circa 1923-1924*

1. Charles Bonager, 2. Stanley Passierb, 3. Ferdinand Squarks,
4. Albert Altruc, 5. Harry Peterson, 6. Roland Santimaw,
7. Charbonneau, 8. ?, 9. Donna Wood, 10. Helen Webber,
11-13. ?, 14. Charbonneau, 15. Evelyn Plouffe, 16. ?, 17. Plouffe,
18-20. ?, 21. Ruth Santimaw, 22. Beatrice Russell, 23, 24. ?, 25.
John Langer, 26. Ray Kimball, 27-29 ?, 30. Amelia Passierb, 31.
Sophie Passierb, 32. Enid Lloyd, 33-35. ?, 36. Andrew Johnson, 37.
Helen Johnson, 38. ?, 39. Margaret Webber, 40. Norma Wood,
41, 42. ?, 43. Burton Fiske, 44-48. ?, 49. Thelma Paignon (teacher),
50. Bessie Bailey (teacher).

West Rutland Memories

"In the summer our well would go dry. In order for my mom to wash we had to go the brook which was in sight of our house. We had a kerosene stove which my mother used in the summer so she didn't have to light the big stove that she called her Black Jenny. My brother and father would take the tank off of the stove and put it in the trunk of the old Maxwell car and go to the brook. For hot water my father would level off a small piece ground for the stove near the brook, putting a small tub of water on the stove and lighting it. After the water heated, with mom and dad we would go to the brook and wash our clothes. She washed and we rinsed after which we would take them home to dry on the clothes line. Small things like handkerchiefs and underwear would be placed on the grass to dry. It was a long day in the 1920's.

During these depression years we had little to eat. My father and brother Harold hunted rabbit, squirrel, and pheasant. My mom made meat pies with vegetables. We had our own garden. Mom canned every vegetable that we didn't eat but kept carrots and turnip in sand in the cellar. There were no freezers in those days. We also picked blueberries and raspberries which we sold on the highway to earn money for new school clothes.

When I was quarantined with scarlet fever, our milk man, Mr. George Taylor would leave the milk outside my bedroom window, to avoid entering the house. Dad had to move out during my sickness as I was very contagious and he had to be able to go to work. Mr. Taylor, also would let us pick blueberries in his pasture, at the top of the hill on Crawford Road. There was a spring in this pasture where we could get nice cold water to drink and also take some home. But we always had to watch out for the mean bull, as he was pastured where we picked the berries. Mom also made jams and jellies from these berries.

My sister Hazel, being the oldest, had to help out with expenses by going to work in the mill in Jefferson, only coming home on the weekend. With our large family our parents struggled to put food on the table."

Submitted by Donna (Wood) Clark



*Former residents
Bill Cantello and Harold Lloyd
Photograph taken 1996*



*Former residents
Hazel (Talbot) Bemis, Bill Cantello,
Jim Kennan and Paul Talbot*



*West Rutland, Massachusetts
West Rutland Village Memorial Dedication Ceremony
May 20, 2006*

Former residents:

Bill Cantello, Beverly Cantello, Paul Talbot, Jim Kennan, Elizabeth Wales, Hazel Talbot (pink sweater), Bill McNamara, Donna Wood, Paul Aubertine, Herbert Kennan, Ray Kimball, Bob Mattson, Elsie Hopps and John Griffin.

On May 20, 2006, a moving ceremony was held at the junction of Routes 122 and 122A in the former village of West Rutland. This well-attended ceremony, with the unveiling of an engraved monument, was held to honor the former residents who lived and played in this village. Many were thrilled to be able to see former friends and neighbors, some who they had not seen for over 60 years. Many who were not able to be present sent letters noting how thrilled they were for this event. Pictured are the former residents who were able to attend.

An indication of the sentiment of the former residents for their former home was noted in the words of Hazel (Talbot) Bemis, Jim Kennan and Ray Kimball. They all expressed their sentiments and memories of West Rutland on this memorable day.

Speakers included:

State Senator Stephen Brewer

State Representative Lewis Evangelidis

Department of Conservation and Recreation, William E. Pula,

Chairman of the Rutland Board of Selectman, Louis Cornacchioli

Master of Ceremonies, H. Scott Davis from the Rutland Historical Society.

Map Locator Guide

Site #	Name or Area	Map #
1	Cross, Edward J.	1
2	Cross, Ralph	1
3	Coughlin	1
4	Priest Estate	1
5	Stearns, Frederick B.	1
6	Doyle	1, 2
6	Houston	1, 2
7	Hopps, Sidney and Annie	1, 2
8	Swanson, Charles	1, 2
9	Santimaw, William and Ruth	2
10	Taylor, George M. and Annie	1, 2
11	Morin, Albina	1
12	Poplars Restaurant	1
13	Baby Anne's	1
13	Hi-Spot Ice Cream	1
14	Tattersall and Bellis	1
15	Grime, Charles and Lillian	1
16	Dufault, Doris	1
17	Balcom	2
18	Conley, Howard and Arlene	2
19	Grapes, Ira	2
19	Russell, William and Rose	2
20	Rutland Junior High School	2
21	Beyea, Percy and Mary	2
21	Wood, Walter and Theresa	2
22	Martin, Charles	2
23	Blake, Dwight	1
24	Daniels Woolen Company	2
24	Lakeville Woolen Company	2
24	Naquag Worsted Company	2
24	Rutland Worsted Company	2

Site #	Name or Area	Map #
25	Basket Shop of Josiah Peirce (alternate spelling Pierce)	2
25	Talbot, Joseph and Lucy	2
26	Ware, Joseph	2
27	Kennan, Herbert and Evelyn	2
28	Talbot, Joseph and Lucy	2
29	West Rutland Village Post Office and Store	2
30	Brown, Nellie Stearns	2
31	McKinstry	2
32	Jones Hotel	2
32	White	2
33	Bungalow, The	2
34	Duplexes, The	2
34	Cantello, Fred and Florence	2
34	Denny, Henry and Ina	2
34	Gaudette, George	2
34	Mason, Clarence	2
34	Mattson, Thomas and Irene	2
34	McNamara	2
34	Oliver, Chester	2
34	Santimaw, Pat and Olive	2
35	Dempsey, Alexander	2
35	Peirce (alternate spelling Pierce)	2
35	Wood, Walter and Theresa	2
36	Aubertine	2
36	West Rutland Village Schoolhouse, One Room	2
37	Bardsley	2
37	Clifford	2
38	Camps, Area B	2, 4
38	Anderson, Alfred	2, 4
38	Bacon, Newman	2, 4
38	Carlow, Frank	2, 4
38	Charter, Andrew	2, 4
38	Fahlstrom's...Clifford, Franz and Hulda, Hazel, and Helen	2, 4

Site #	Name or Area	Map #
38	Hilton, Inez	2, 4
38	Hurst, Albert and Stella	2, 4
38	Melgren, Carl and Helen	2, 4
38	Stickler, Emil and Anna	2, 4
39	West Rutland Train Station	1
40	Charnock Cut	1
41	Lloyd, Oscar and Maude	1
42	Worcester Academy Camp	1
43	Camps, Area A	1, 3
43	Bergdahl, Hilda (43F)	1, 3
43	Bergdahl, John (43D)	1, 3
43	Dutrum, Joseph and Florence (43E)	1, 3
43	Erickson, John and Winnie (43B)	1, 3
43	Erickson, Karl (43C)	1, 3
43	Fox, Edward and Elizabeth (43G)	1, 3
43	Kenneally, Timothy and Josephine (43I)	1, 3
43	King, George (43L)	1, 3
43	Lapointe, Joseph (43K)	1, 3
43	Leafe, Carl (43A)	1, 3
43	Spence, Charles and Mary (43H)	1, 3
43	Trudel, Edmund (43J)	1, 3
44	O'Leary, Mary	1
45	Delehanty, Mathew	1
46	Oak Hill Farm	1
46	O'Herron, James F.	1
47	Rutland Prison Camp	1, 5
48	Rutland Prison Camp Hospital	1, 5
49	Martin, Charles	1
50	McGann, Anna	1
51	Quimby, Mary	2
51	Wood, Walter and Theresa	2
52	Adams, Robert B.	1
53	Brown, Ethel	1

Site #	Name or Area	Map #
54	Continental Barracks	1, 5
55	Suchocki (alternate spelling Suchochi)	1
56	Bowman, W.H.	1
57	Kitchen, Louis	1
58	Towne, Roscoe and Dorinda	1
59	Passierb	2
59	Talbot, Joseph and Lucy	2
60	Squarks	2
61	Home owned by Rutland Worsted Company	2
62	Garrahy	2
62	Winot	2
63	Brodmerkle	1
64	Barn, The	2
65	Rutland Prison Camp Superintendent Home	1, 5
66	Finn	2
67	Rutland Prison Camp and Hospital Cemetery	1, 5
68	West Rutland Village Cemetery	1, 2
69	Gristmill, First	1
69	Wheeler, Paul	1
70	Clark, Captain Jonathan and Phoebe Bowen	1
70	Cemetery, Goose Hill	1
71	Thrasher, Raymond "Stubs"	1
72	Cleary, John	1
73	West Rutland Village Swimming Hole	1, 2
74	Paris	1
75	Kennan, H.A.	1
76	West Rutland Village Memorial Dedication Monument	2
77	Park, Horace	1
78	Rutland Prison Camp Boss Farmer Home	5

CHAPTER 2

Rutland Prison Camp and Hospital

~

1904 - 1934



Prison Camp (47)



Rutland Prison Camp Hospital (48)

THE RUTLAND PRISON CAMP AND HOSPITAL

1904 ~ 1934

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Chapter 393 of the Acts of 1898 related to the State reclaiming and improving waste or otherwise unused land with the labor of prisoners from jails and houses of correction throughout the state. Section 1 authorized the governor and council to purchase or otherwise take waste and unused land, not exceeding one thousand acres in area, for the purpose of reclaiming, improving and disposing of such land for the benefit of the Commonwealth.

In the very early 1900's, land totaling over nine hundred acres was purchased from Messrs. Walter Hunter, Frederick Hunt, Zebulon Strong, Arthur Thompson, Charles Landon, Patrick Delehanty and Henry Van Ostrand. Van Ostrand owned the former farm of Captain Phineas Walker. Captain Walker, who moved to this farm in 1750, was a Captain of the militia during the Revolutionary War. A very influential member of the town, he served in many of the town offices. His farm was known as Elm Tree Farm, no doubt for the giant elm tree that stood beside his home. It was said to be one of the largest in the county until it succumbed to Dutch Elm disease and was lost in 1924. The farm remained in the Walker family until the time of the Civil War. Rueben Walker Road, named after one of his sons, is a quarter of a mile north of the prison camp. Captain Walker passed away in 1792 at seventy-one years of age.

Thus, with Frederick G. Pettigrove, serving as Chairman of the Prison Commissioners for the State, the process began to create Rutland Prison Camp (47) in the area of northwest Rutland known as New Boston. This area was comprised of farms, a mill and a former one-room schoolhouse.



*Former farmhouse of Captain Phineas Walker
Used as the office of the Prison Camp*

THE WHEELS ARE TURNING

In the year of 1902, workers were in the process of demolishing most of the buildings on the former Walker farm. The house was refurbished for use as a temporary kitchen, offices and sometimes quarters for the officers of the camp.

As might be expected, the townspeople had reservations as to whether they wanted such an establishment in their town. It seemed that history was repeating itself. After all, back in 1778 the government imposed on them when they chose Rutland as a place to confine British and Hessian prisoners from the Revolutionary War. Probably the same sentiment was heard, as would be heard today when something unpopular is proposed “-not in my backyard”. To quell fears or misconceptions the town clerk, Mr. Louis Hanff, composed the following letter to the townspeople about 1902.

“The new state prison reservation, which the commonwealth is to have in Rutland, need not be in any cause for anxiety among the citizens of Rutland. I believe it will be a good thing for that part of Rutland. Much of the land taken for this purpose is waste land. The two farms taken were abandoned, upon one little but the house remained and the house and barns on the other were fast going to ruin. The location was such that it could not be expected that any person would buy the place and build up the farms and buildings. The tenants for the past dozen years were not the most desirable. The property had been sold and sold again to persons who in all probability would move of them and have not done anything with the property, except use it to trade for other property, or sell it to someone who would drop several hundred dollars on the deal.

Now, we may expect to see the old house put into shape for habitation. The old barns, either repaired or torn down. Already the construction of one of the buildings has begun and while they will not be as imposing structures as those of the sanatorium, they will at least be better than no building or a lot of tumble down shacks. This gives employment to several now and later more will be employed. In conversation with the superintendent of the prison camp, as it is sometimes called, I learned something about the scheme, although he admitted he knew little of what might be expected of the place, enough was learned that the superintendent was a man who was interested in the town. It was the desire of the officials to help the town*

*The sanatorium he refers to is the Rutland State Sanatorium, a tubercular hospital on Central Tree Road.

and they desired the town to help them. No fear of the inmates of the camp need be had, as they will come here in charge of an officer, coming from the jails and houses of corrections. Short term only may be those sent to the state farm at present. When their term expires, they will be put up in the cars and sent to Boston, Lowell or Springfield or wherever they belong and the officials will see that they get there, no danger of their staying in Rutland.

I also learned that it was the intention of the prison commissioner to meet the citizens of Rutland at some time and talk the matter over with them, giving us a better idea what the scheme is.

One thing I feel we may be sure of and that it is, that it will surely work to advantage to our town in more ways than one."

Louis M. Hanff

In 1903 John Carter of Petersham took a quitclaim deed to the unused former New Boston schoolhouse. It stood across the road from the Walker farmhouse. Shortly after the camp was established, the officers and mechanics working on the buildings used the schoolhouse as temporary sleeping quarters. Later on, prisoners used it as temporary quarters. At the time of the camp closing, it was home for the boss farmer (78) and his family.



The boss farmer's home (78)
This building was the former New Boston one-room school



Superintendent George C. Erskine and family

RULES AND ASSIGNMENTS

By year 1904, while much work remained, the prison officially opened with William A. Witham as superintendent. Future superintendents would be George C. Erskine, Elmer Shattuck and Willard J. Turner.

On April 29, 1904, sixteen prisoners were indoctrinated upon their arrival at the camp. Superintendent Witham would be there to greet them, inform them of the rules of conduct, issue clothing and assign them to jobs. The first prisoners to arrive were quite pleased with their new accommodations, feeling the mattresses and noting that their new home looked like it would be a vast improvement over their previous confinement. While they sat on their new beds, Superintendent Witham informed them of the rules. These rules included no profanity, disorderly or insubordinate conduct and no talking while at labor. Quarreling or any other disruptive conduct would not be acceptable. Prompt obedience to all rules and being cheerful and polite were also required. They had to treat all with civility and politeness as well as practice cleanliness. Also, lest they think all would be easy, there would be a schedule that they must abide by. The daily routine required that they arise by 6AM for breakfast and roll call, march to their assigned jobs and work until 12 noon. Then they reported for lunch and roll call. Following this, they marched back to their jobs and worked until 5PM when they had supper and roll call. They did have yard privileges until 8:45PM when there would be a final roll call and then to bed. Being sent back to the prison from which he came would be his punishment should any prisoner violate these rules. For most of them, this would be punishment severe enough to warrant their good behavior. This camp offered them good food and bed and an opportunity to get out and enjoy the fresh air, even if it was to work in the fields. Surely, this was an improvement over their previous confinement to a cell.

The rest of this indoctrination included the issuing of new clothing. Their new wardrobe would include gray prison pants, vest

and short coat, dark blue gray underwear, yellow mixed stockings, gray cap, blue and white outside shirt and a pair of heavy shoes and slippers. At this time, the belongings that each man came with would be put in a bag with his name and date of release stamped onto it. The sentence usually ranged from two to six months. Jobs were assigned at that time and if one had a particular expertise, he would be assigned to a job that took advantage of his talent. Others were assigned to wherever they were needed at the time. A man could be taught a trade should he not have a work history. Ideally, he would put that trade to good use upon his release.

Evidently, the prisoners working in the kitchen came with some experience in that field. The prisoners also gained experience by tending the gardens. A typical Thanksgiving dinner would consist of roast chicken, squash, onions, cranberry sauce, plum pudding and mashed potatoes. The prison labor provided nearly all this food. On December 10, 1910, Christmas would be equally as festive with then Superintendent George Erskine helping to serve the prisoners.

By April 1904 a temporary kitchen had been set up in the old Walker farmhouse. Completed were horse and cow barns, silos and service buildings housing carpentry and blacksmith shops (see building layout on page 105). The prisoners were also in the process of digging ditches for the foundations of other new buildings, digging trenches for sewage, cutting down trees, clearing land for the further planting of crops and digging a root cellar in which vegetables could be stored in the winter.

There was also a plan to use convicts to help on public works outside the prison, a practice that was and still is widely used in the south. While it was proposed on a number of occasions, with a few exceptions, it was not generally accepted in Massachusetts. Prison labor, however, was used while building the road known as Prison Camp Road. This road would provide a more direct route to the West Rutland Train Station (39).



The dormitory



The dining hall



Prisoners marching to work



Prisoners working the garden



Tree stumps dotting the cleared land



Hand dug drainage ditch

INDECISION

In the year of 1905 plans were in the works to build a hospital at the camp. Tuberculosis was a serious health issue and Rutland, with its high elevation and clean fresh air, was already a center for the treatment of this disease.

The Legislature of 1905 passed... “An act to authorize the Board of Commissioners to establish a hospital for prisoners having tubercular disease.” This act was approved on May 1, 1905. This hospital would be the first in the country devoted solely to treatment of tubercular prisoners.

To illustrate the indecision of the time, it was proposed that with its elevation and an area large enough for a drill field, it would be an ideal spot for the training of State troops of the signal corps. It was suggested that the prisoners could be employed to further clear the land and pitch tents thus saving the State the expense of that labor. Evidence shows which plans were brought to fruition since there was a prison and hospital here and not a signal corps training ground.

THE HOSPITAL (48)

The hospital was built at the Rutland Prison Camp since many prisoners from throughout the State prisons were suffering from tuberculosis. The building would have to be large enough to accommodate at least one hundred patients. As many of these patients were confined for serious offenses, the hospital would have to be constructed in such a way as to securely confine them. Unlike many of the short term prisoners, some of these prisoner/patients could be a danger to society, should the opportunity to escape arise. They had shown that they were reluctant to abide by the rules of a civilized society and they were carriers of a very contagious disease. Steps must be taken to insure the public that these individuals would remain confined.

The steam-heated hospital was a very impressive structure with the cells lined with sheet steel. On two sides of the building was a ten-foot wide piazza. This piazza was beneficial for the treatment of tuberculosis which consisted of plenty of fresh air and a balanced diet. The piazza with its open screening provided fresh air, as the prisoners would sit out bundled up in heavy blankets, winter and summer. For the prisoner/patient, this was the extent of his outdoor enjoyment.

The outside of this building was quite impressive as well. It was built of fieldstone with cement blocks for trim. The ruins of the hospital, on top of the hill and across the road from the prison, are the most impressive remains of the Prison Camp.

Reportedly, while the prisoners were preparing the ground for the hospital, human skeletal remains were uncovered. According to Prison Commissioner Pettigrove, *"It must be the remains of an Indian from the shape of the skull and must be the Indian chief, due to the fact that they were always buried on the top of a hill."* The writer can neither confirm nor deny that assumption.

By 1907 the hospital was officially part of the Rutland Prison Camp, now known as the Rutland Prison Camp and Hospital. The first prisoner/patient was delivered in September of 1907. On September 25, 1907, Joseph Azala was the first patient to die at the hospital. He was twenty years of age.



Prison Camp Hospital (48)



Prison open-air piazza



Hospital ward

ESCAPES, CAPTURES AND REWARDS

In spite of the better living conditions, not all prisoners accepted their punishment and honorably served their time. Escapes did occasionally take place. Usually the escapees were apprehended before they were able to make it to the railroad tracks which were about three miles away.

The following is a small sample of the escapees.

- July 7, 1904: John Sullivan was the first prisoner to escape. There is no record confirming his recapture.
- July 20, 1904: D.B. Blanchard, age 60, escaped from the industrial camp at West Rutland.
- May 15, 1909: Charles Moore, Henry Tyler, Frederick Williams, Timothy O'Callahan, and Joseph Murtaugh did escape from the hospital. Despite numerous searches and flyers circulated in the area towns, only one of the prisoners was captured. On May 23, 1909, Henry Tyler was captured and returned to the hospital. He died from tuberculosis on January 8, 1910.

The reward for the capture of the escapees was the princely sum of ten dollars a head. Ten dollars at that time was probably worth the energy it took to track the men down and the inherent danger of doing so.

A cement building which contained six cells was reserved for prisoners who were unable to abide by the rules. Solitary confinement in this building was their reward for serious infractions.

As a very little boy living in the far reaches of West Rutland, this writer worried about those escaped prisoners lurking in the shadows. Of course, there was no need for fear as the last prisoner had been removed from the area ten years before, an important fact that escaped the attention of a young mind.

ALL IN A DAYS WORK

The camp was meant to be almost completely self-sustaining. Gardens were planted and chickens, goats, oxen, horses, pigs, cows and a bull were purchased.

The garden, all accomplished with prison labor, was very productive. In 1911 it yielded 1800 bushels of potatoes, 175 bushels of onions, 500 bushels of turnips and carrots and 5000 heads of cabbage. This crop would feed the camp with the remainder stored in the root cellar for the winter.

The herd of purebred Holstein cattle produced enough milk to supply the camp as well as 400 quarts of milk sold daily to the Worcester market, netting a yearly profit of five thousand dollars. For this yield, in May 1931, the herd received first place in the Quaboag Herd Improvement Association of Worcester County. The king of this herd, and no doubt the most content with his surroundings went by the name of Middleton Sir Ormsby Pietertye. He was a purebred bull that reportedly cost five thousand dollars.

The poultry department netted the camp from ten to twelve thousand dollars yearly, producing over 1800 eggs a day. This supplied the camp with chickens and eggs. The rest were sold to area markets. Approximately 20,000 chicks were hatched annually.

To illustrate the significance of this successful operation, Superintendent George Erskine stated "*The conduct of the men at the camp has been exceedingly gratifying...from all appearances they largely come from the most dissipated and idle classes. Never in the history of the prison have we received so many ragged and ill-clothed men. After a short time at the camp, with plenty of good plain food and sanitary surroundings, they grow to show as great an interest in the work as if they alone reaped the benefits from it.*" In some respects this was true. They benefited from bountiful meals and the self-respect that some of them must have gained before their release.



Newly planted garden with hospital pictured in background



Middletown Sir Ormsby Pietertye



Award winning purebred Holstein cattle



Oxen and horses getting ready for another day at work



*Horse barn
Garage and workshops to the rear*



Superintendent Willard Turner

SUPERINTENDENT WILLARD TURNER

Across the road from the solitary confinement cells and down hill from the hospital was the beautiful home (65) of the Prison Camp Superintendent. As in all the other projects, the prisoners supplied most of the labor of building this home.

In 1918 Willard Turner assumed the position of Superintendent at the Prison Camp and Hospital. While previous superintendents had a humane policy, Mr. Turner came on the scene with a fresh approach as to how to operate a penal institution. To the short timers it was fatherly in nature. He treated the men with respect, fed them nutritious meals, gave them good medical care, and instilled in them a pride of accomplishment and dignity. Most of them did not bring these qualities with them. As long as they abided by the rules, Mr. Turner did his utmost to treat them with respect, placing them in suitable employment upon their release.

One of the men had been involved in the banking business before his commitment to the prison camp. His offense probably did not make him a sterling candidate for a return to that profession. While in prison, he took an interest in the herd of goats being used primarily as lawn mowers. He supervised the breeding and raising of the herd which numbered sixty four. Every year at Easter, one hundred kids were sold. The young bucks went to the Italian population in Worcester. This resulted in a handsome profit for the camp. Upon his release, the prisoner bought the herd and subsequently founded a new business. While not all the men were success stories, at least some of them did learn to be responsible and productive citizens, not returning to the irresponsible lifestyle that they led before their incarceration.

On July 1, 1929, a new system was inaugurated whereby only state prisoners would be admitted. Turner felt these prisoners were more likely to comply with the rules of conduct. With good behavior came the possibility of a parole recommendation. The short-term prisoners had little to gain and were more likely to cause trouble.



Home of the Prison Camp Superintendent (65)

ON YOUR HONOR

The prisoners had many opportunities to escape. While it has been noted that more than a few of them did, most of them did not. There were many opportunities while working in the fields, traveling to the train station with a minimum amount of supervision and fighting brush fires in the area.

A prime example occurred on August 25, 1927 when a fire, caused by defective wiring, broke out in one of the buildings. The prisoners fought the blaze until the fire departments arrived and then continued until the fire was under control. The fire destroyed eight buildings and was not contained until Worcester responded with their larger pumping equipment. With the fire finally extinguished, not a single prisoner was unaccounted for. It must be noted that when looking at undated photographs, it might be difficult to distinguish between the original buildings and the buildings rebuilt after the fire.



An exercise in futility



Heavy equipment coming to the rescue



One of the prisoners hosing down the roof of the dormitory

Charles Martin, a guard at the prison camp, related in a 1934 article that the prisoners would often stop at his home (49), a short distance from the camp, for a cold drink and a piece of pie. He further states that although some of the inmates were wild, most were just weak and had little inner resources to resist temptation.

Ray Kimball, Burton Fiske, Harold Wood and other village boys were allowed to go to the prison to play baseball with the prisoners, with a guard watching nearby. Near third base was a huge manure pile. The prisoners could not run very fast, but the young boys could run like deer. Unfortunately, the young boys were not always able to stop before landing in the manure pile. Ray remembers that many times the boys reported home for supper badly in need of a change of clothes.

END OF AN ERA

In 1931 it was reported that the prison camp would soon close. It was within the watershed of the soon to be created Quabbin Reservoir which would supply Boston with water. One might question why all that labor and materials were used to create the prison camp knowing it would be temporary. By 1934, all the prisoners would be transferred to the Norfolk Prison Colony. The Rutland facility was discontinued after a mere thirty years. The hospital and most of the buildings were demolished. Those remaining were dismantled and rebuilt elsewhere.

Evidence of the existence of the prison camp can be witnessed by the remains of the root cellar, solitary confinement cells, slab foundations of the wagon shed, hay barn, cow barn, dairy room, silos, horse barn, manure shed, other sheds, garages, carpenter shop, blacksmith shop and smoke house. Also in evidence are the prisoner dorm, utility building, exercise yard, superintendent's home cellar hole (65), water tower, prison cemetery (67) and hospital (48) (see building layout on page 105). There is also some evidence of structures in the area of the chicken coops. The hospital remains are, by far, the most impressive.

It has been recently suggested that this area should be bulldozed and a small part of our history erased. The writer fervently hopes that this thinking be met with indignation and opposition. Historians and readers of this book, interested in preserving our past for future generations to enjoy, will hopefully voice their concerns.

On Charnock Hill Road in the area of Goose Hill Cemetery (70) is the location of the Prison Camp Cemetery (67). While families have claimed most of the remains, fifty-nine bodies were not. They were buried in this small cemetery with numbered iron crosses marking each grave. A number of years ago the Boy Scouts identified this site with a stone marker. Thanks to the Boy Scouts, this stone marker is the only evidence today of the significance of this plot of ground. While many of these men were incarcerated for theft, it

seems that in death, they were themselves victims of theft, as all of the iron crosses have been stolen. To some members of our society, nothing appears to be sacred. It is also evident that not all criminals are behind bars.

In closing, it has been said by some, that military prisoners were confined and ammunition stored here during the Second World War. This writer has found no documentation that would support these claims. It has been noted that in 1778 British and Hessian prisoners were confined here. Because the Prison Camp was not proposed until 1902, this obviously cannot be possible.



Rutland Prison Camp and Hospital Cemetery (67)

Additional photographs of The Rutland Prison Camp
and Hospital...



Vegetable root cellar



*On left: Cow barn, dairy room, and silos
On right: Hay barn*



Pump house



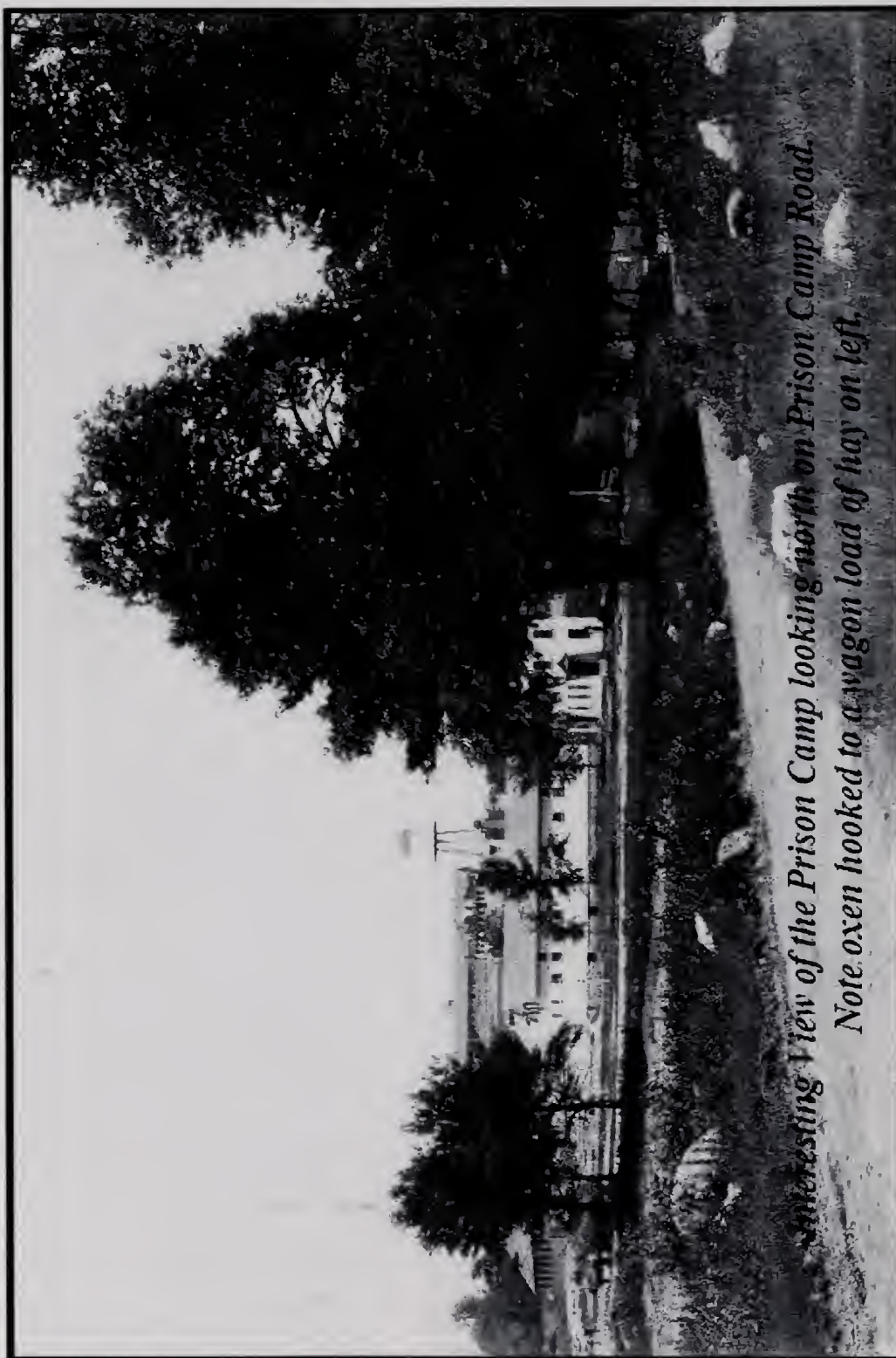
*The water tank stood at the top of the hill
in front of the hospital*



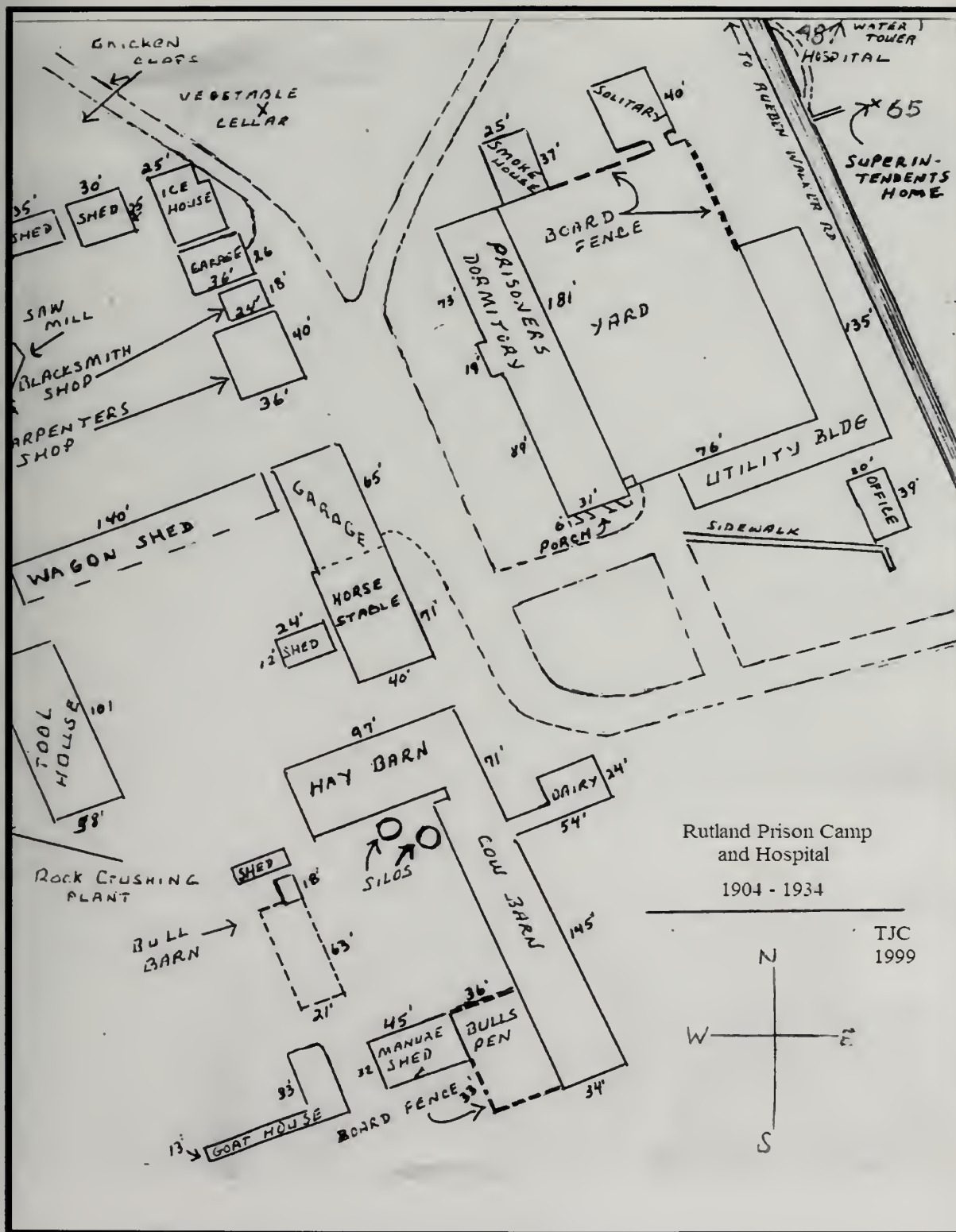
*Approaching Rutland Prison Camp and Hospital
on Prison Camp Road*



*View of Prison Camp from the top of the water tank
Superintendent's home (65) pictured on left*



*Interesting View of the Prison Camp looking north on Prison Camp Road.
Note oxen hooked to a wagon load of hay on left.*



Rutland Prison Camp Building Layout

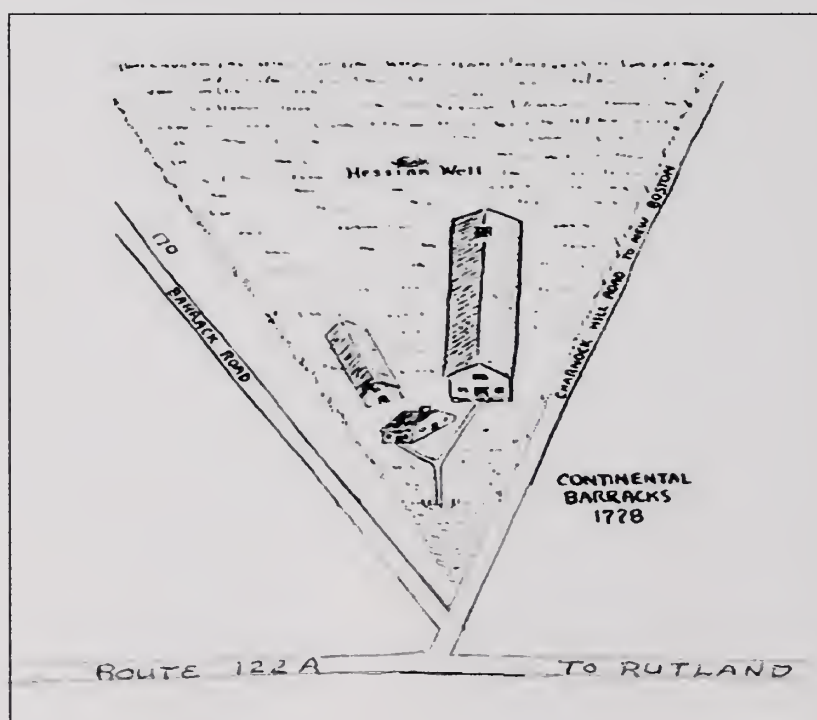
CHAPTER 3

Continental Barracks

1778 - 1783



Continental Barracks Rutland, Massachusetts 1778-1783



THE CONTINENTAL BARRACKS RUTLAND, MASSACHUSETTS 1778 ~ 1783

SURRENDER OF GENERAL BURGoyNE

The year of 1777 found General Burgoyne's army enroute from Canada to Saratoga, New York. At Saratoga, his army was to engage in battle with the Continental Army. If the Battle of Saratoga were won, he would be in position to join the rest of the British forces in New York, hopefully taking Albany and quite possibly isolating New England. This would be an important military victory for the British.

The general and his army were not to achieve this victory and were captured on October 18, 1777 when Burgoyne surrendered his army of British soldiers and German Hessian mercenaries to General Horatio Gates.

One of the regiments who fought the British at Saratoga in 1777 was the Seventh Regiment, under the command of Colonel Nathan Sparhawk. Rutland men served in this unit along with men from Paxton, Princeton, Hubbardston, Holden, Barre, and Templeton.

Burgoyne's army was known as the Convention Army because of the treaty (or Convention) that Burgoyne signed before his surrender. This treaty stated that his army, in defeat, would be marched to Boston and then shipped back to Great Britain. The document was entitled the "Convention of Saratoga." Unfortunately for the Convention Army, the plan to return them to Great Britain did not come to fruition. On January 8, 1778, Congress resolved to suspend the terms of the Convention of Saratoga, thus keeping the approximately 6,000 prisoners in custody. This decision would create future problems for the prisoners and their captors.

As we move on to the short lived saga of the Continental Barracks in Rutland, it must be pointed out that research reveals many different accounts as to arrivals and departures of prisoners

and the number of prisoners involved. There is however, no doubt, that the Continental Barracks existed and Rutland played an important role in our country's history.

Information for this article was extracted from the following...

1. Mass Archives
2. "History of Rutland, Mass." by Jonas Reed (1836)
3. "History of the Town of Rutland" by T.C. Murphy (1970)
4. The Rutland Historical Society, Rutland Mass.
5. "The Story of the Convention Army" by William Dabney
6. The Worcester Spy (Originally known as Massachusetts Spy) of August 29, 1898

MARCHING TO CAMBRIDGE

The prisoners, along with some women, their children and assorted camp followers, who were allowed to follow their husbands in battle, were marched to Cambridge, Mass., where they were billeted on Prospect and Breeds Hills.

During the first part of the march through eastern New York, they passed through predominantly loyalist settlements. These settlements were friendly to the interests of the motherland, Great Britain. The entourage, with its prisoners, encountered very few problems securing housing for each night's rest. Hospitality lessened as they marched eastward and they began to encounter ever-increasing resistance. In the town of Brookfield, Massachusetts, the inhabitants absolutely refused to provide accommodations. Neither the generals nor the Congress could persuade them to do otherwise, due to their antipathy for Great Britain and its heavy-handed tactics.

Despite their capture, the morale of the prisoners was quite high. Prior to their capture, they had been on reduced rations. Now the fighting was over and they were elated with the treaty the crafty General Burgoyne had negotiated. It stipulated that when they

arrived in Cambridge they were to be put on a ship to be sent home. Even when losing, they were winning! To further boost their spirits along the way, there were many opportunities to drift into the settlements and enjoy the hospitality of a few local young ladies. The prisoners were heard to remark that they were quite impressed with the fine looking American girls and no doubt their hospitality. Most of them returned to camp each night after their evening of entertainment, but more than a few wandered off with no intention of ever returning.

TROUBLE AT CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge was not a suitable location. Not only was the housing inadequate, but it also was deemed to be too close to shore. This made it convenient for the prisoners to escape to friendly ships in the harbor, sail to another port and likely engage in further battles with the colonists.

The British officers created additional problems with their very arrogant attitude as they strutted around like peacocks. It would appear that their surrender in battle did nothing to dampen their lofty airs. In spite of their defeat, in their minds there was nothing quite as splendid or regal as a British officer. They expected to be accorded due respect as well as being addressed in a manner worthy of gentlemen of their lofty rank. The enlisted men were also causing trouble in Cambridge, refusing in many cases to be disciplined or follow orders.

It was suggested rather coyly by General Burgoyne that if his men were not going to be going home, they should be exchanged for prisoners from the Continental Army. This suggestion, deemed by the Continental Congress to be a foolish move, would surely supply the enemy with fresh troops to engage in further battles. It was felt that moving the prisoners inland would be a more effective strategy, thus lessening the danger of escape.

Instead of sailing home as they initially were led to believe, the

prisoners would be on the march again. This time it would be to a barracks nearing completion in a town called Rutland, some fifty-three miles inland. The prisoners were said to have called it Siberia and were not at all happy about the move.

While this story cannot be documented, it was reported that as the troops were marching through Worcester, on their way to Rutland, people came to watch the procession. A woman who was standing by the roadside with her hands on her hips, stared at the soldiers. One of the British soldiers was said to have remarked, "What's the matter, didn't you ever see any lions before?" The woman is said to have replied, "Lions? I declare you look more like lambs to me."

THE CONTINENTAL BARRACKS

On March 21, 1777, the Continental Congress resolved to build three barracks in Massachusetts capable of containing fifteen hundred prisoners and on May 15, 1777,

The Honorable Moses Gill and Colonel Thomas Dawes be and are hereby appointed a Committee to repair to the Towns of Rutland and Barre in the county of Worcester and procure a piece of ground, take a deed thereof agreeable to the following resolve of Congress and erect or contract with person or persons to erect the wooden barracks.

Appointed to serve on a committee to build the barracks were Colonel Daniel Clapp, John Frink Esq., and Deacon Jonas Howe who were all Rutland residents

The piece of land in Rutland purchased for the barracks formed a triangle containing four acres. It was situated on the corner of Charnock Hill and Ten Rod Roads (now known as the state road, Route 122A) and was owned by Patrick and Margaret Brine. On August 13, 1777, it was deeded to Henry Gardiner, Esq., Treasurer

of Massachusetts. Messrs. Howe and Frink signed a contract with Captain Thomas Read to build the barracks. He, along with the principal contractor, appointed Mr. Chamberlain Eustace as the principal carpenter. Captain Isaiah Wheeler was paid 1000 pounds to build the eight chimneys that would supply heat during the long cold New England winters.

Each barracks would be 140 x 40 feet, two stories high, each story 8 feet high. It was to be framed, raised, boarded, shingled and clapboarded with three entryways crossing through the house. There would be a staircase at each entry to be divided by plank partitions in said rooms of twenty feet square. There were to be two windows in each room, three squares wide and four squares high. The floors were to be laid with double pine boards.

All the workmanship was to be done in the plainest manner with the materials to be found and provided on the spot, ready to the worker's hammer. The stockade around the barracks was to be made of chestnut, fifteen feet high, sharpened at the top and four feet of the lower end scorched by fire. There also would be a guardhouse capable of housing forty to fifty men. A bake and storehouse would be at the corner of Dublin Road. Carpenters interested in providing their skills were to send in their proposals to the Secretary of State in Boston on or before the following July 4, 1777. The carpenters chosen were instructed to complete their work as soon as possible. One-half of their money would be paid in advance upon their bond, with the remainder paid upon completion of their work.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

The materials were to be acquired locally, whenever possible, which proved to be a difficult task. It seemed that the townspeople, who probably numbered considerably less than one thousand at the time, were not particularly receptive to the idea of having fifteen hundred foreign prisoners in their community. This attitude made them reluctant to supply any of the necessary materials to complete

the project. Before the people relented and supplied the necessary materials and labor, they attempted a little revolutionary era extortion, asking for exorbitant fees for their goods and services.

It finally came to pass that in order to acquire materials including glass, shingles, brick and lumber, more drastic measures would need to be enacted. The people in Rutland and surrounding towns refused to honor the request for building materials. An order was executed whereby either the locals would sell the necessary goods for a fair price or a committee, consisting of representatives from both parties, would agree to a fair price. The residents would be forced to accept the terms of said Committee.

In the end, the government's wishes prevailed and the people were compelled to accept fair prices for their goods and services. Rutland would experience a somewhat similar situation one hundred and fifty years later when the Commonwealth of Massachusetts took land from West and North Rutland, for the Quabbin Reservoir project.

Other material needed to construct the barracks included 10,000 20d nails, 46,000 10d nails, 74,000 4d nails, 250 spikes and 81 hinges. The Board of War supplied all of these. The money to purchase these supplies ultimately came from the people, the very same people that were reluctant to participate in this endeavor from the beginning. This was to be a portion of the price of freedom from Great Britain and her heavy-handed tactics.

The need to reinforce the Northern army created a shortage of men. As a result only one barrack, with stockade surrounding it and housing 500 men, was to be completed before the fall weather was upon them. It was also determined by the council that the original plans of three barracks would have far exceeded the sum that Congress had expected. In view of this situation and the shortage of materials, it was dictated that it would be wise to wait until they heard from Congress before any further building took place.

MARCHING TO RUTLAND

In April 1778, one regiment of British soldiers was marched from Cambridge, Mass., to Rutland, or as the prisoners called it, Siberia.

One can only imagine the consternation of the residents of this small town. In spite of their resistance, the enemies of their new homeland were marching into their town. Would their wives and children be safe? Would this newfound notoriety bring the war to their town? Would the British officers and their men display the same unruly behavior they had in Cambridge? Surely, this was a time of great trepidation for the fledgling town of Rutland and its residents. It was bad enough when they had to deal with those troublesome Indians. [With all due respect to Native Americans, the term troublesome did not adequately describe the disdain that the settlers had for them at that time].

ADDITIONAL HOUSING

With construction problems, the dilemma arose regarding housing for the captive officers. While the rank and file were confined to the bleak barracks, the British officers, true to form, complained about the accommodations afforded them. Rutland residents had refused to allow them to reside in town. After much resistance, they finally consented to allow the officers into their residences. This is another example, in the military, of “rank having its privileges.”

By May of 1778, the Deputy Commissary General of Prisoners, Major Joshua Mersereau, had obtained use of every building within four miles of the barracks. It was also directed that the committee take possession of the former dwelling of John Murray Esq. The home that would later be known as the General Rufus Putnum House would be used to house British officers when they were not taking their turn keeping order in the barracks.

It does seem strange to the writer that the officers who were in charge of keeping order left much to be desired when keeping

themselves in order. They were seen riding their steeds around town in their splendid uniforms, as though there was not a war being fought, or that they were the captured enemy. It could be imagined that these arrogant British officers felt that their presence surely brought an air of civility to the town and honor from its people.

HOSPITALITY

It should be noted that a number of prisoners, while not welcome upon their arrival, chose upon their release to remain in this country. Many obtained work on neighboring farms and some went on to serve their new country in the military. It is reported that three Rutland young ladies succumbed to the charms of these temporary residents. The following quote regarding British officers' conduct while in Rutland is an excerpt from Jonas Reed's "History of Rutland, Mass." of 1836.

The commissioned officers with waiters, by parole, quartered in private houses, and in general their conduct was gentlemanlike, they lived in style, kept houses, paid their bills on Saturday; their deportment was mostly in accordance with the articles of convention. But some of them run the risk of captivating and really did make three fair prizes, with which they sailed the rivers of victory, with a cargo of precious Stone, and valued as a rich Hall.

The "precious cargo" refers to three local girls by the name of McClenathan, Stone and Hall, who married British officers. One might wonder if the reputations of these local damsels suffered as a result of these unions.

Zachariah Hatstat was one of the Hessian soldiers confined at the Rutland barracks in 1778 who remained in the area upon his release. His grandson, Alfred Hatstat, would become a postmaster in Rutland. In 1910, he was tragically killed by a train in Dorchester,

Mass. Many grandchildren and great grandchildren survived him. It is entirely possible that descendents of British and Hessian prisoners who were interred at the barracks are living in this area today.

PROBLEMS AT THE BARRACKS

Things did not run smoothly at the barracks. They were plagued with a number of problems and food was one of them. The prisoners would obtain permission from the officers to go into town to barter with the inhabitants for vegetables. While the townspeople had food, it is not clear what the prisoners had to barter. Jonas Reed's "History of Rutland, Mass." states that it was a common sight to see a prisoner walking through town with his wife trudging behind, a knapsack of potatoes slung over her back. It appears chivalry might have been in short supply during that time.

Rutland November 1, 1778

To The Officers Commanding At Rutland

Sir- We the British and German troops now confined in the Barracks at Rutland, beg leave to inform you of our situation in regard to provisions; as we have received not bread for the four last days of October and fish for the last two days likewise, no rice, no soup, for the seven last days of October, and now this being the first of November and day for commencing provisions again and no hopes of drawing any, we beg that you will take our starving condition into consideration to get our rations delivered to us as some of the men had no provisions for the last two days past, Sir we remain your obedient servant-----

*Signed in behalf)Andrew Johnson Sergt. 53regt,
Of the whole)Sidney Stackhorn Sergt.of the
 Brunswick troop,*

)C. Breade Q.M. Sergt. Hessian
Jagers,
)Wm. Schneyder Sergt. infantry

Further evidence of dereliction of duty in the dispensing of provisions was charges leveled against Mr. Robert Pope, who was in charge of this operation.

A letter from General Gates to General Gray read:

*Sir: The crimes of which Mr. Pope, the Issuing
Commissary At Rutland, is accused render it necessary
that he be arrested and tried for the same. You will,
therefore, order a proper person to take Mr. Pope's place
in Rutland. It would be highly proper for you to go to
Rutland. See your new deputy placed in office, and take
note of the proceedings of your late one, and make
proper reports to me and the Commissary General of
Issues and your transactions therein, I am sir, Your
Obedient Servant
Horatio Gates*

General Gray and Commissary Richardson did come to Rutland and appointed Daniel Clapp to replace Mr. Pope, but not before this letter was sent by the Deputy Commissary General of Prisoners, Major Joshua Mersereau, to General Heath in the spring of 1779 describing the conditions in Rutland.

*Flour almost gone, and no teams to fetch any, No hay, no
straw and one to be had for paper money, nor less than
\$1 dollar silver par 100 and no power to impress teams
or hay; wood cannot be got without forage to feed the
teams. What to do I cannot determine, I beg the favor of
your honor's interposition with the council in my favor for
relief.*

This letter was written by Major General Horatio Gates regarding Robert Pope.

*Sir; I entirely approve of everything you have done in the displacing of Mr. Pope and the appointment of Coll'n Clap. Issuing Commissary of Provision at Rutland. I only relent that Mr. Pope is not punished in a more exemplaring manner - if half which is alleged against him is true, he deserves to be hanged; In case flour becomes more scarce you must increase the allowance of rice to the prisoners and diminish that of flour. I am entirely satisfied with your conduct, and shall represent my approvation thereof to General Washington. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
H. Gates*

Evidence of more problems at Rutland arose when Major Mersereau was reprimanded for allowing individual prisoners to leave town without guard. On another occasion, it was charged that a Colonel Campbell was allowed to move about town with loaded pistols in his possession. Major Mersereau was again reprimanded for his lack of good judgement.

MARCHING SOUTH

To escape the bitter cold and lack of food the prisoners from Rutland, as well as surrounding New England states, were marched to Charlottesville, Virginia in 1778. It is said that some returned to England while others found New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York to their liking, never returning to their homeland. Not all prisoners, though, were sent south. On December 24, 1778, one hundred German Hessians with a considerable amount of provisions remained in Rutland without guard. In April 1779, several grenadier officers of the Hessian Battalion Kohler were captured at sea and were sent to Rutland, to be exchanged in 1781.

With the cessation of hostilities announced in April 1783, all the prisoners were released with the exception of the remaining Hessian captives who seem to have been forgotten. It took an appeal from the Brunswick officer in charge to the Hessian commander in New York to secure their release in June 1783.

This marked the end of Rutland's short but important role in the defense of this country against Great Britain.

Rutland, Massachusetts, can be proud of its contribution to the independence of the United States of America.

THE WANING YEARS OF THE CONTINENTAL BARRACKS

In the years after the last prisoner was removed, the barracks was used to house the followers of Daniel Shays of Shays Rebellion. A part of the building was used at different times as a private dwelling, the last being the family of William Owen Smith. James A. Smith preserved, for many years, some of the pickets from the stockade. Unfortunately, in 1830 they were lost when a portion of the former prison was destroyed by fire. At other times the barracks was used as a card factory, a store and finally as a tavern. The guardhouse was torn down around 1900.

Fragments

Worcester Spy

Thursday July 16, 1778

*Deserted from the Barracks of the 71st regiment at
Rutland, the following prisoners of war.*

*Alexander Adamson, 5 ft. 5 in. high, sandy hair, swarthy
complexion; had on when went away a brown short coat
and long trousers.*

James Dowell, 5 ft. 5 in. high, brown hair, fair complexion; had on when went off a loose great coat.

James Moat, 5 ft. 10 in high, black hair, dark complexion; had on when went away a red coat faced with blue, with the no. 21 on the buttons.

July 15, 1778

Whoever will apprehend these deserters and bring them to the subscriber at Rutland, shall receive thirty dollars for the three or ten dollars for each; it is also required of all the sheriffs committees and Selectman of the respective county and town or others who may be under their care and send them to Rutland as they are immediately to go to Newport to be exchanged for our unfortunate brothers who have suffered long in captivity; and as each is apprehended and brought in will relieve one of our suffering friends. It is hoped that every relenting soul will exert themselves to apprehend and send them to Rutland as soon as possible.

Joshua Mersereau GC

Princeton, August 23, 1780

Jesse Fowler of New Salem advertises that a woman came to work for him, called herself Allen--a widow; she later ran away and stole some property. N.B.

says she came from the Barracks in Rutland and heard she returned thither. Offers his respect and a suitable reward.

August 26, 1779

Deserted from the guard at Rutland on the 18th. Joseph Cobb belonging to the New Braintree, a soldier in my company; aged about 18 years. Light complexion, short

light hair about 5 feet high, he had on when he went away, a light colored coat and a long white trousers; whosoever will take up said deserter and bring him to me at Rutland before the first day of October, next shall have \$20 reward and all necessary charges paid by me.

Joseph Livermore, Capt.

Capt. Ephraim Hartwell advertises that he will meet all of the guards who served at Rutland for 5 months and pay them their state pay at Ezra Jones in Worcester Sept. 6, 1780

A FEW MYTHS

Tradition relates that on the last night before the start of the seven hundred mile march to Virginia, the prisoners raised havoc. Supposedly, some of them threw cooking utensils into the well. Happy at the thought of their release from guard duty, the guards were said to have hurled a brass cannon into the well. Years later the Rutland Fire Department pumped the well dry. They removed all the stone that had been thrown into it over the years. Nothing else was ever found. It has also been said that the well was dug to a depth of seventy-five feet when in fact it is closer to forty feet deep.

PRESERVING OUR PAST

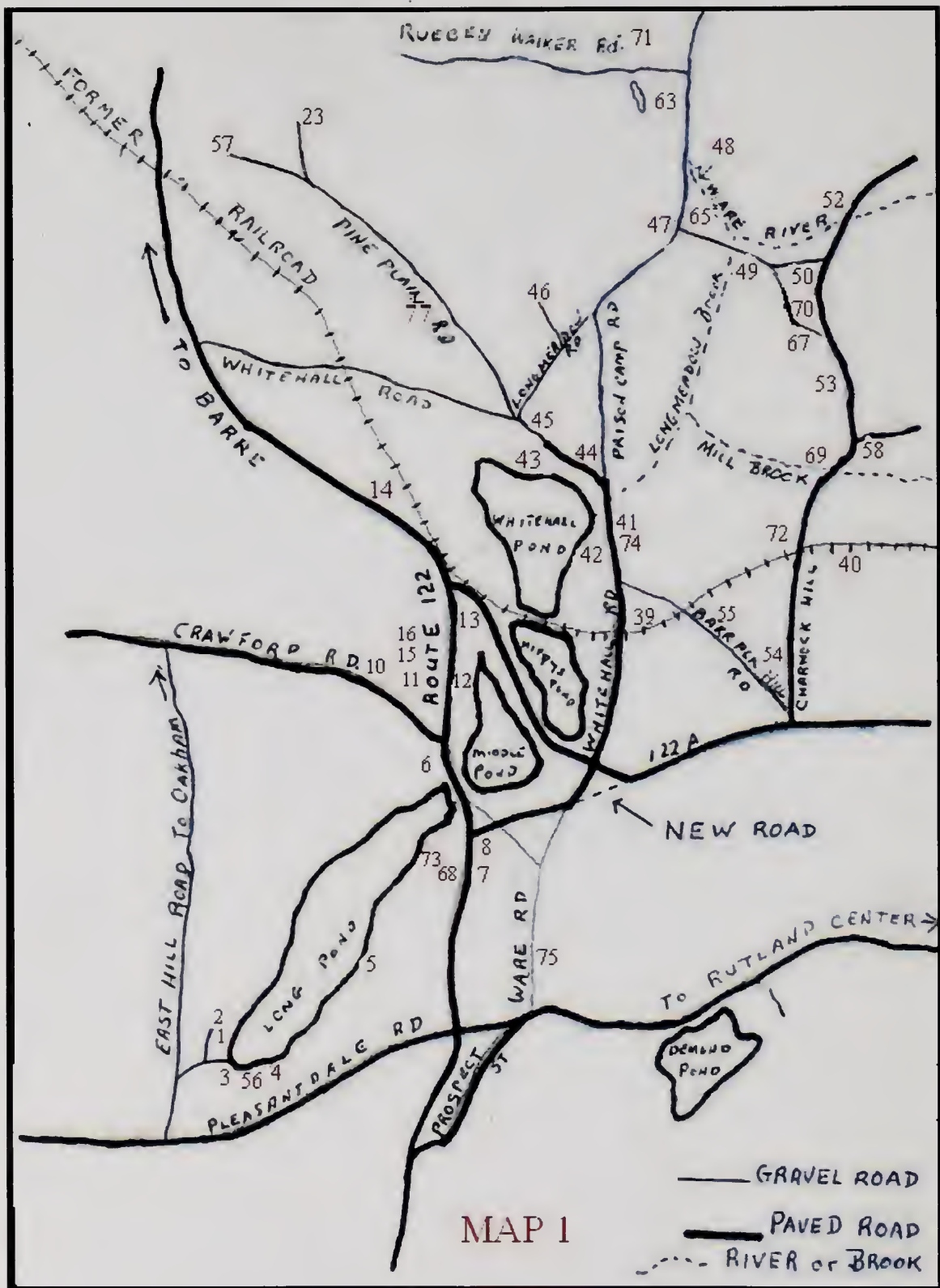
Sadly, there is very little to indicate the historical significance of the area that contained the Continental Barracks. The well that was dug by the Hessians is all that remains of the barracks. Many years ago, Frederick S. Hunt placed a small marker on Charnock Hill Road, noting the location of the former barracks. There is also a marker on Barrack Hill Road, noting the historic site. Surprisingly there has never been any need to make repairs to the well, as the men that laid the walls knew their business. The only modern touch has been the efforts of Mr. Hunt in cleaning the well and cementing the top so that there would be no danger of desecration to this

valuable piece of Rutland history.

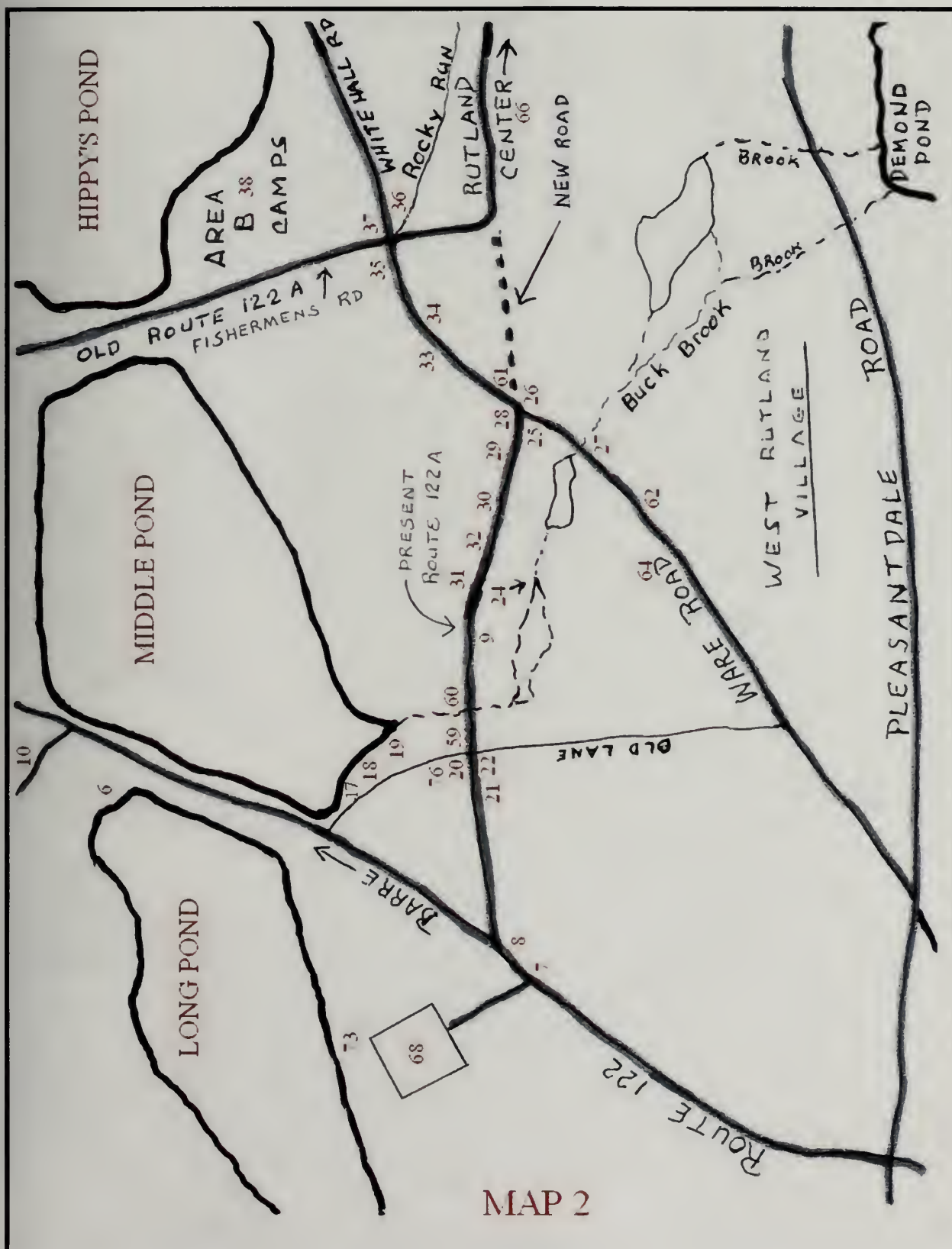
While rightfully suggested that this area should be preserved as an historic site, it is still private property. It is hoped that nothing will be done to cause this piece of our history to be destroyed and that the present owners' privacy will continue to be respected. On April 21, 1998, Mr. David Moore, great-great grandson of Frederick S. Hunt, donated to the Rutland Historical Society a door from the Continental Barracks. This door as well as other related information is on display at the Rutland Historical Society.

CHAPTER 4

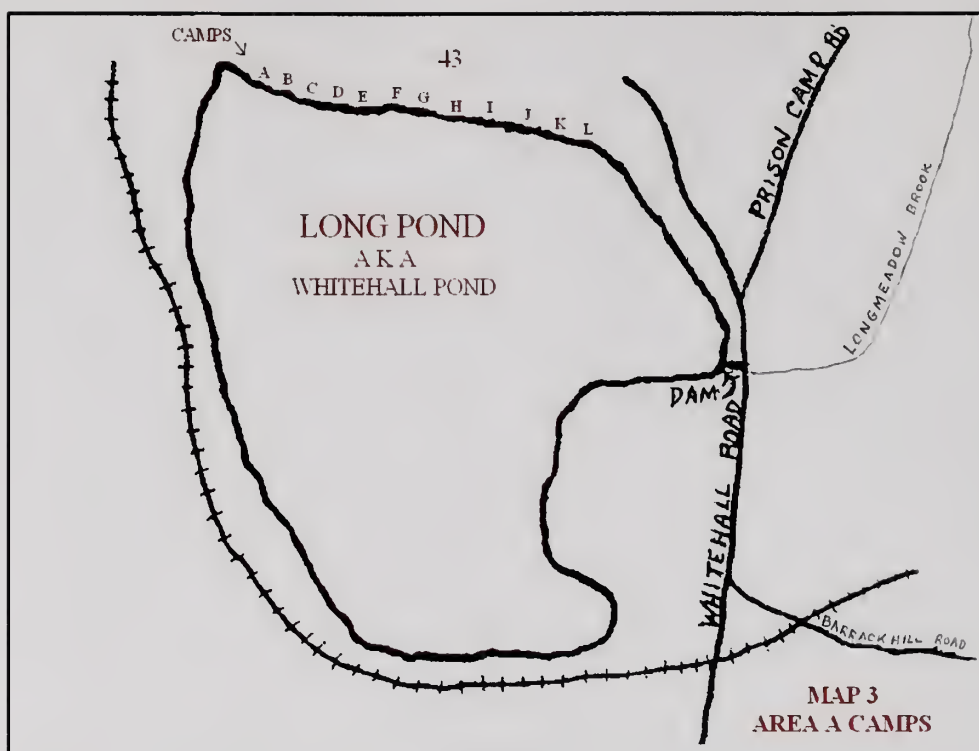
References



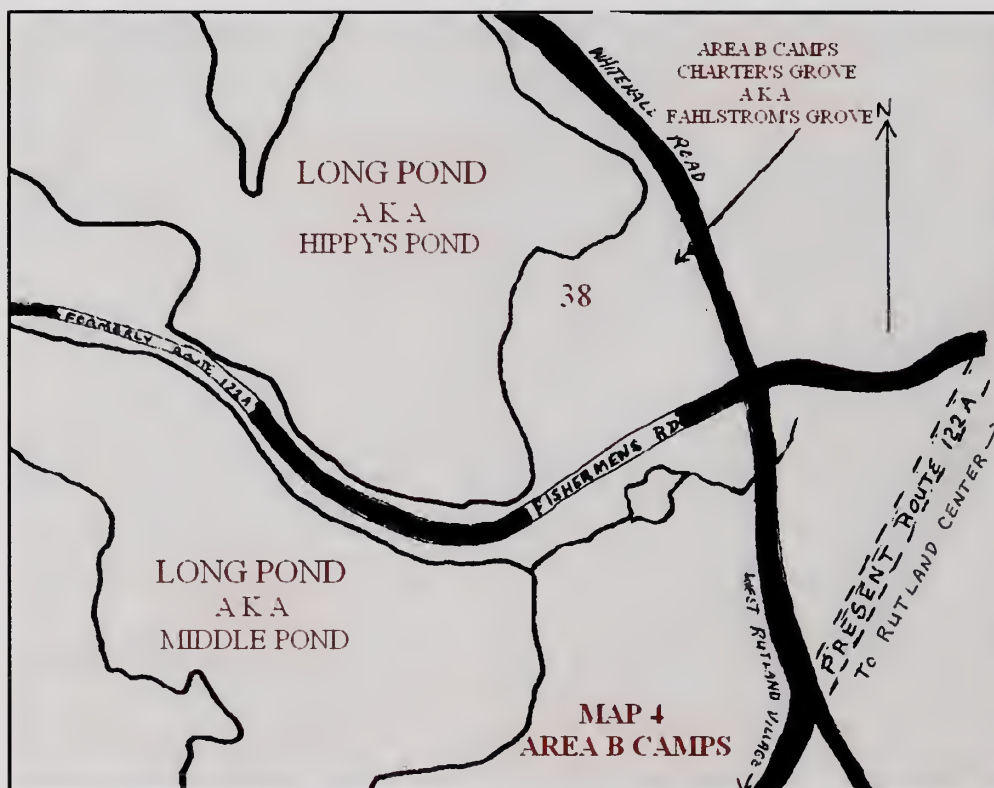
Map #1 West Rutland and Outlying Areas



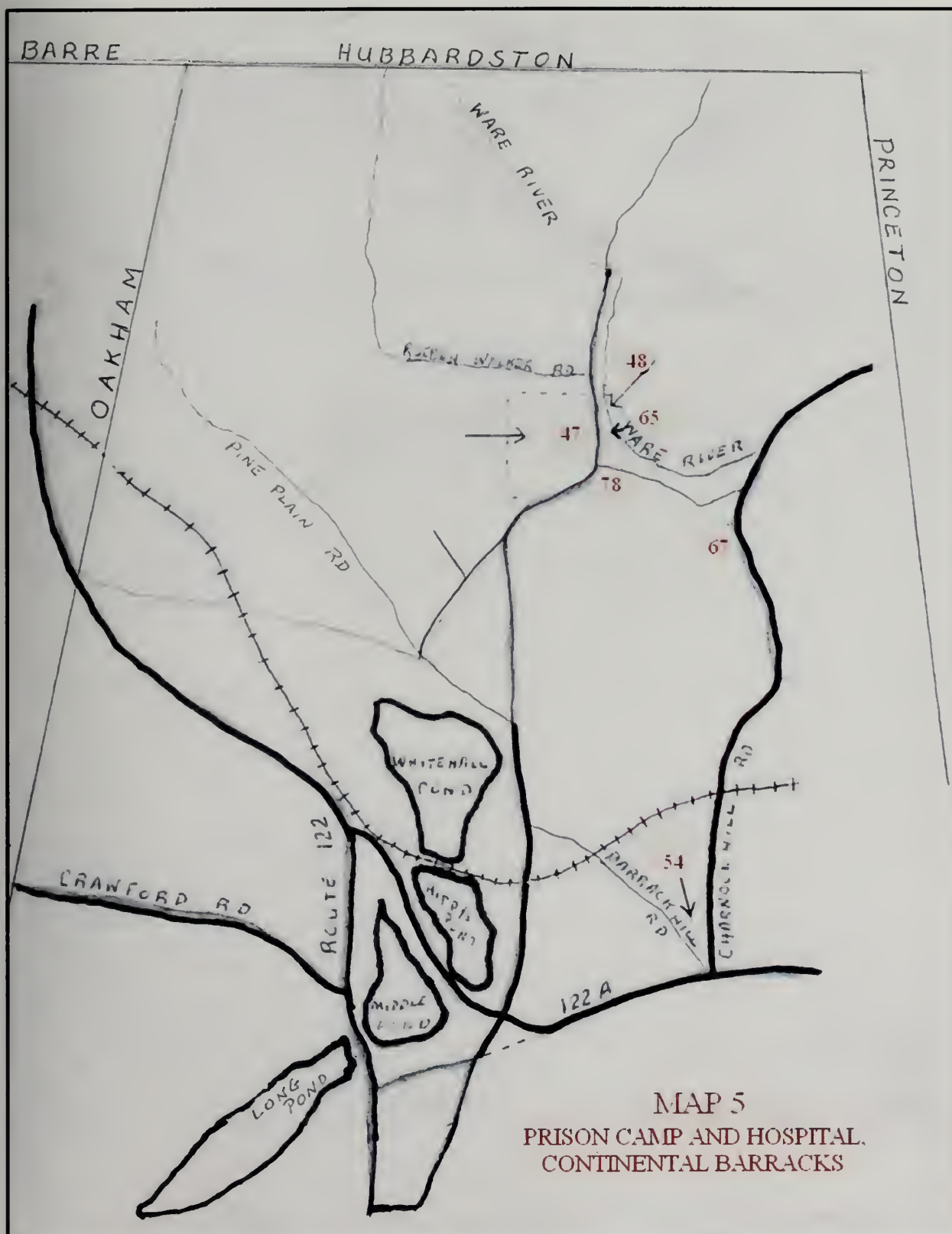
Map #2 West Rutland Village



Map # 3 Area A Camps



Map # 4 Area B Camps



*Map #5 Prison Camp and Hospital,
The Continental Barracks*

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Talbot, Joseph and Lucy...and children Hazel, Ruth, Arthur, Paul, Bob, and Ray	(28)	7i, 9, 50i, 65i, 68i, 69i, 70, 72	2
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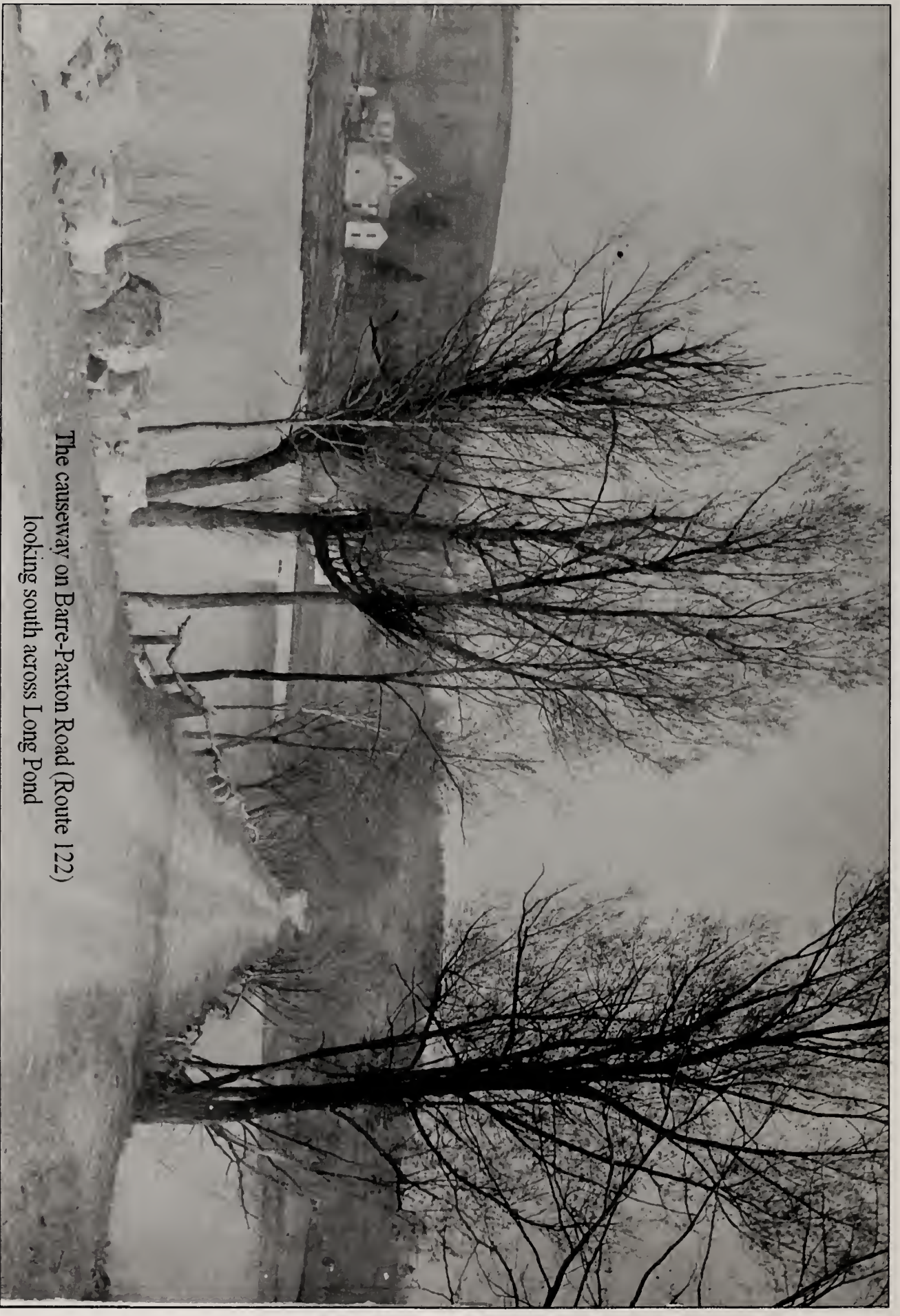


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